

The Gramophone

Edited by **COMPTON MACKENZIE**

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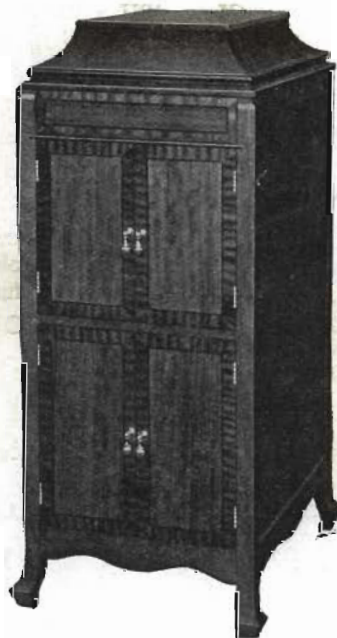
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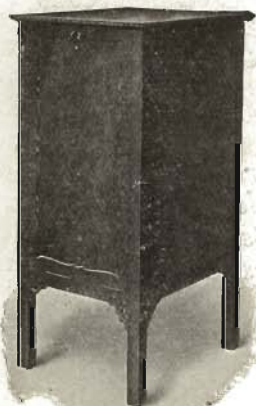
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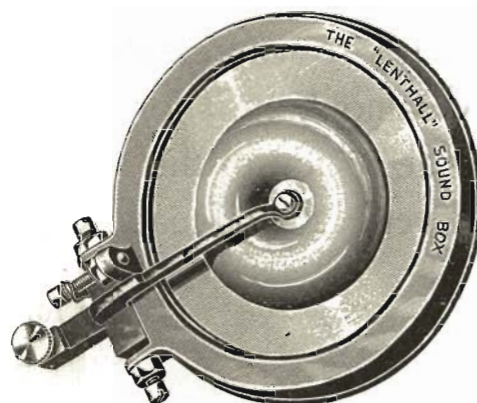
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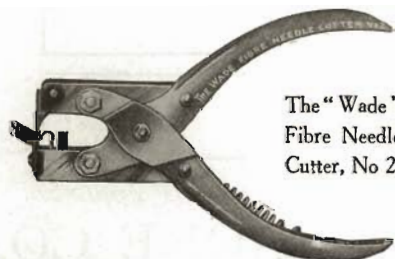
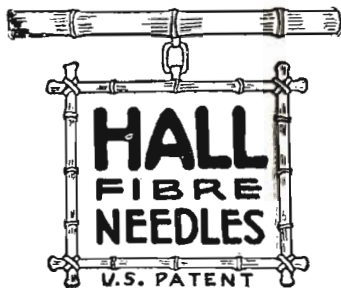
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Edited by
COMPTON MACKENZIE

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Vol. II.

JANUARY, 1925

No. 8

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LONDON OFFICE NOTES

The New Year

IT is not possible to thank individually all the friends who have sent us congratulations on the past year and good wishes for 1925. The spirit, no less than the number, of these expressions of encouragement is overwhelming; and the Editor and his Helots can only make public profession of sincere gratitude for so stimulating a support, conscious as we are that the happy family of a year ago has been largely increased without becoming in the least unwieldy. It is evident that our readers carried out the Editor's injunction in December 1923, when he wrote, "If each reader will get us *one* new subscriber during next year, I shall be able to pay both staff and contributors and myself. And at the same time, what is much more important, our influence will be *quadrupled*. You know what that will mean." There is no need to emphasise the steady growth of our influence in the gramophone world, since, to judge by our correspondence, our readers are very much alive to it.

Two of our readers, however, will probably read this paragraph with incredulous disgust. They are both well-wishers, but verbose critics. Their letters have been acknowledged, but they must accept our assurance that they are in a tragic minority.

The Trade

It would be churlish to let the new year begin without extending our thanks and congratulations to The Trade on behalf of our readers, as well as of ourselves, for the unparalleled achievements of the last twelve months. On the former count the quality of music vouchsafed to us and the reduction in prices of records have made all of us happier, and we are convinced that a continuance of this policy—the heightening of the one and the lowering of the other simultaneously—will not jeopardise the dividends of shareholders in the long run. On the second count we can report with sincere thankfulness an, if possible, increased cordiality between ourselves and The Trade. For it is obvious that we are out—have been out since the beginning—to help them to sell their goods without disappointing their clients; that THE GRAMOPHONE is primarily a clearing-house for the unsatisfied wants of the public; that in its pages the intelligent manufacturer and dealer can find from month to month what the public likes and—even more important—what it dislikes about his wares; that in short we are, what we have always wanted to prove ourselves to be, the Bridge between the Trade and the Public.

A Hint

There is one important subject to which we wish to draw the particular attention of our friends the manufacturers of gramophones. In the course of the last few months the question of needle-track alignment has been thrashed out in these columns. It is a question which does not interest nine out of ten gramophone owners, but which is vitally important to all of them if they are also record owners. Upon it, more than upon any other condition of manufacture and use, depends the life of each record. There is no reason why a single gramophone should be sold to the public which has not got its needle-track alignment as nearly correct as is possible. The articles of Mr. Wilson are there for everyone to read, and we beg all manufacturers to go into this matter carefully, and if necessary to amend their ways. We promise on our side to do all we can to help them and to make this condition of alignment one of the essentials upon the strength of which we shall advise enquirers to buy or not to buy any particular make of gramophone.

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The Future

THE GRAMOPHONE itself being now on a fairly secure footing, we may glance at other activities which are off-shoots of it. A good start has been made with the National Gramophonic Society which enrolls new members nearly every day, and has so clearly justified its existence by the first issue of records that little anxiety is felt as to its eventual prosperity. The Player-Piano Supplement, which completes its first year with this issue, has not yet entirely justified the hopes with which it was started; but a light seems to be breaking here and there through the clouds of trade depression, and Mr. Percy Scholes' article in the *Observer* of December 14th must have made a good many converts. Probably the result of our efforts so far has been to make more player-pianists buy gramophones than gramophonists to add a player-piano to their furniture.

Captain Barnett's "Gramophone Tips for 1925," to which reference was made in the last number, is now ready for distribution, and without in any way suggesting that because it is published from the London Office the little book has anything more than a mere *imprimatur* to connect it with THE GRAMOPHONE, we may assert that it contains a remarkably comprehensive survey of gramophone matters at the present moment, and will interest all our readers in one aspect or another.

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The Balmain Gramophone

Mr. Balmain has installed his gramophone at 58, Frith Street, where, though the space does not

really give it a fair chance, it may be seen and heard by any of our readers who care to make a previous appointment. There seems to be a chance that the "Balmain" may before very long be put on the market, but there are difficulties to be surmounted, as anyone who sees the machine can judge for himself. The Gramophone Co. has kindly supplied an H.M.V. No. 2 sound-box, and at our special request Mr. Balmain has installed one of the Motophone electric motors, such as are marketed by the Columbia Co. We feel that the electric motor must eventually be used by every one who has electricity in his home, and it is only necessary to ensure noiseless running, steadiness of current, and safety from over-heating—three conditions which have baffled a good many inventors in the past. Mr. Balmain reports of the Motophone: "I have now thoroughly tested the Motophone which has been fitted—thanks to the kindness of the Swiss inventor—to my machine. It gives promise of being all that its inventor claims for it. This remarkable motor has a great range of speeds, during any of which it appears to have no difficulty in maintaining a steady and powerful torque—an indispensable desideratum in gramophone practice. It is without gears in its driving mechanism, and were it not for the addition of the usual type of governor it would be entirely so.

It can be fitted to any gramophone of table or gramophone size, and notwithstanding the fact that it will work at any voltage in general use—direct or alternative—it is as simple as an ordinary tapped coil in wireless practice. A point which will appeal to all electricians is that the motor does not over-heat—in fact, it is remarkably free from this defect." During the next few months we shall have ample opportunity to judge the practical utility of the Motophone.

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Competition

As foreshadowed last month the next Competition must be directed to the discovery of good comic records by popular vote. We therefore offer a Prize of Two Pounds' Worth of Records (to be chosen by the winner) for a list of the *Twelve Best Comic Records*. The field is large, and we do not attempt to limit it by definition; but the Editor's article last month may be taken as an indication of scope.

The following rules must be observed:—

- (i) Write only on one side of the paper and give make, number, size, and price of each record.
- (ii) Post your list, with the coupon on p. xxx, in an envelope marked "Competition," so as to reach THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, not later than the first post on February 1st.
- (iii) The Editor's decision is final, and he reserves the right to publish any of the lists sent in.

CHAMBER MUSIC ON THE GRAMOPHONE. I—Sonatas

By THE EDITOR

THE greatest pleasure I derive from the gramophone is chamber music; partly because after many years of patient effort I have educated myself to appreciate chamber music, and partly because the performance of chamber music by the gramophone is so much better than its performance of orchestral music. Although it is a great joy and privilege to have symphonies in miniature, I do not think that even the greatest enthusiast can claim that in the present state of reproduction orchestral works on the gramophone are anything more than a *pis aller*; whereas the reproduction of chamber music is so satisfying that I for one am not ashamed to say that I prefer chamber music on the gramophone to hearing it in the concert-room. Of course, could I afford a first-class string quartet of my own which would wake me in the morning with Mozart and send me to sleep in the evening with Beethoven, I should no doubt prefer the real thing. To go at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and sit in an uncomfortable stall, unable to smoke, and oppressed as often as not by the personality of one's neighbours, is not the way to listen to chamber music, and these are the conditions under which one usually has to listen to it. My correspondence is continually reminding me that there are many devoted adherents of the gramophone who are still, either through lack of faith or out of prejudice or obstinacy, wilfully ignorant of the greatest pleasure that their gramophones can afford them. For one person who will take the trouble to appreciate string quartets twenty will strive to master a symphony. Of course, it is all to the advantage of music that this goodwill should be shown toward great orchestral pieces, and it is scarcely necessary for me to point out at this time of day what a remarkable piece of educative work the gramophone is doing. It has occurred to me that some of these doubters have perhaps been put off chamber music by an enthusiastic friend's insistence upon their listening to a Brahms quartet with a high opus number, before they were ready for such advanced fare. The purpose of this article is to provide, subject to the limitations of my own musical equipment and to the fallibility of my own judgment, as complete a guide as I can compile to chamber music on the gramophone at the close of the year 1924.

One of the difficulties I have always found in obtaining from musically uneducated ears an

appreciation of orchestral works is the unfamiliar sound made by orchestras. I remember on one occasion, when I tried some of Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto* on such an audience, I found that so long as the piano was playing the records were voted good; but when the orchestra took possession, I detected an immediate loss of attention. Several of my correspondents have remonstrated with me for not doing justice in our reviews to the many excellent band records that are produced. The fact of the matter is that I should be glad if no band records at all were produced for another five years. Not because I don't enjoy band records myself, but because so many people get into the habit of associating all orchestral music with the noise made by a band. There is no doubt whatever that the more a musically uneducated ear enjoys listening to bands, the less it can endure listening to orchestras. In the same way the musically uneducated ear is bored by the noise made by a string quartet. It wants something more sugary, like the celeste or harp. The first thing to do, therefore, is to accustom a listener to the noise of the string quartet, not by playing to him one of those dreaded ops., but by choosing a quartet's performance of *Drink to me only with thine eyes* or a trio's performance of Gade's *Extase*. I should welcome from any recording company a series of popular tunes arranged for the string quartet. For it is the string quartet which is the particular bugbear of the musically uneducated ear. A trio with the familiar piano as one of the instruments seems much more homely and comforting, and I have often noticed that a less obvious melody played as a trio will win more appreciation than a more obvious melody played as a string quartet. Before I go any further, at the risk of making some of my readers suppose that they are being sent to the kindergarten again, I would say that a string quartet consists of two violins, viola, and violoncello. A string quintet will usually consist of two violins, two violas, and violoncello. A piano quartet is violin, viola, violoncello, and piano. A pianoforte quintet is the ordinary string quartet with piano added. A string sextet is usually two violins, two violas, two violoncellos. A trio is violin, violoncello and piano. But note that in the Vocalion list you will find several trios in which the viola is substituted for the violoncello owing to their good fortune in having the services of Mr. Lionel Tertis. There are, of course, many other combinations. The

clarinet is a favourite instrument for the chamber music added to a string quartet. Schubert wrote a quintet in which the double-bass was added to the ordinary quartet of strings. The horn, flute, and the oboe have all been used. Before we reach the trio we have, in sonatas for the violin and piano, a good deal of chamber music for two instruments, and I think that if I advise those readers who are anxious to embark on the adventure of chamber music to begin with sonatas, I shall not be wrong. Everybody will have listened some time or another to a violin solo, and perhaps he will have wished sometimes that the ghostly tinkle which in most cases represents the piano accompaniment might be made a little more prominent. That is what gives the charm to a good sonata for violin and piano. One is not surfeited with either instrument. Below you will find a list as complete as I can make it of the records published up to date of sonatas or parts of sonatas for two instruments:—

BACH.—*Sonata in E major for violin and piano: Second and Fourth Movement*, Maud Powell (H.M.V. D.A.345). This is a charming record, and the second movement is a delicious little tune as easy as walking down-hill on a fine spring morning.

BEETHOVEN.—*Sonata in F for piano and violin (Spring Sonata), Allegro, Adagio molto espressivo, Scherzo, Rondo*: Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1231). My own delight in this exquisite work will be best expressed by the excerpt from one of my own books in which I have tried to convey in words a faint shadow of its beauty.

So after dinner Mark sat in a Caroline chair with tall wicker back and from the most shadowy corner of that arched and shadowy music-room listened to the music. It was not astonishing that somebody had called this the *Spring Sonata*, for what in all music was more expressive of spring than that opening allegro? It was the very spring of *St. Mark's Eve*, and it told—

*Of unmatured green valleys cold,
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,
Of rivers new with springtime sedge,
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,
And daisies on the aquish hills.*

Why, it was from this room that he had walked back at dusk to Wych-on-the-Wold with those lines in his head on the *St. Mark's Eve* before his seventeenth birthday, and when he had seen Esther hurrying before the wind down to Rushbrook Grange. The whole scene flashed upon his mind; and then, looking to where Pauline in a dress of rosy silk was playing this cold and poignant melody, cold and poignant as a thousand unmatured springs that never warmed to summer, Mark wondered if she was telling with her violin a tale of primroses untimely cut by chilling winds.

Now it was the Adagio in which all the regret for what might have blossomed from that cold and careless green of spring was expressed in the plangency of the violin speaking of the individual's grief, but which grief when the piano took up the melody seemed to belong less to the individual than to the very scheme of things, to be a grief inherent in every spring that was and is and will be. It sounded as if Pauline was deliberately making the violin speak for herself, as if the individual proclaimed that whatever the grief inherent in every spring, the grief of the human heart was always something just that much more poignant; and the Adagio came to an end with a long lamenting note that transcended art and spoke with the directness and poignancy of life. Mark wished, as the note died away, died away in the candle-light like a singed moth, that he had not asked Pauline to play; for when she played that Adagio it seemed to him that he had asked her some question about her unhappy love and that she had told him, and wept in telling him.

But now the Scherzo was saying that happiness was still possible. To be sure, it was a wistful happiness, a happiness chastened by past sorrow, but it was still the authentic happiness of spring. It was not the mellow tranquillity of autumn. There were times when Beethoven in his Rondos and Scherzos seemed to enter the jolly dance himself and to prance with an elephantine playfulness, singing *Ring-a-ring of roses*. But he was observing the delicate mirth of this Scherzo as an old shepherd might watch his lambs gambolling in an apple orchard. And as Mark listened to the way Pauline was playing this movement, it struck his fancy that she, like the composer, was standing outside the dainty tune and unable to join even in such a demure display of merriment, and that it was this aloofness of hers that made that mirth sound wistful. It was as if in the way she played it she could not bring herself to take part, although she was sad to feel herself outside.

With the last movement Pauline picked up the threads of her torn life from the first movement, and began to weave them together in a new pattern. *Allegro ma non troppo*. It was not such a gay pattern as the original; but it was by no means sad or dull, and it was woven closer than the first. It was a neat little pattern that was being woven by that industrious and busy little melody; and when there seemed a danger of loose threads hanging out the pizzicato clipped them off without any mercy.

[*The Parson's Progress*, pp. 221 ff.]

There are two older records of this made under the same number by the Columbia Company, in which Mr. Sammons plays the violin instead of Mr. Catterall, and in spite of the scratch which turned it into a trio, in some ways I liked the older records better. I find the tone of Mr. Catterall's violin rather too robust and less appropriate than the fairylike wistfulness of Mr. Sammons' interpretation. I should not recommend this sonata to beginners, for though personally I cannot imagine anybody's not loving it from the first note that he heard, I have not found it a great success with listeners of merely average taste.

BEETHOVEN.—*Sonata in A for piano and violin, Op. 47, No. 9 (Kreutzer Sonata)*: (a) Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1210-1), (b) Hayward and Bourne (H.M.V. C.844-5). This is the most famous of Beethoven's sonatas for piano and violin, and though it is no longer my own favourite I think I should be right to assume that it will probably be the favourite of most people. For one enquiry from correspondents about the *Spring Sonata* I have ten about the *Kreutzer*. I find it very difficult to choose between the two renderings. My own impression is that Hayward and Bourne play it better than Catterall and Murdoch, but the H.M.V. records are very scratchy, and I think that in recommending the Columbia version I shall probably be suiting the tastes of the majority.

All versions of the two Beethoven sonatas are cut. Isn't it about time that we had some more of his sonatas for the violin and piano? Melodies by General Dawes are all very well, but the reparations we want from Germany on the gramophone is the music of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and the rest of them.

BRAHMS.—*Sonata in D minor for violin and piano, Op. 108, Allegro, Adagio, Un poco presto e con sentimento, Presto agitato*: Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1535-7); *Adagio* only, Daisy Kennedy and Hamilton Harty (Col. L.1337). Perhaps this is not

the ideal sonata for beginners in chamber music, but it is by no means difficult, and I may remind readers that in a recent number it was beautifully analysed by Mr. Percy Scholes.

COLERIDGE TAYLOR.—*Sonata in D minor, Op. 28, Allegro, Larghetto, Allegro vivo*: Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1396-7). This is pleasant easy stuff, but I cannot say that I care for it much. The recording is very good.

ECCLES.—*Sonata* (arr. Hamilton Harty and W. H. Squire) (violoncello and piano), *Largo, Moderato, Adagio, Allegretto*: W. H. Squire (Col. L.1053). I don't know this record, but there was an extremely good record of a sonata by Eccles for violoncello and piano played, I think, by Beatrice Harrison, but alas, no longer in the H.M.V. catalogue. Eccles was one of the earliest English composers, and I strongly recommend his works as a relief from some of the sickly violoncello records with which we are flooded.

ELGAR.—*Sonata, Op. 83, Third Movement, Allegro non troppo*: Hayward and Bourne (H.M.V. C.980). I cannot make any comments, as I do not know the record, but Hayward and Bourne can always be relied on.

CÉSAR FRANCK.—*Sonata in A*: (a) Phyllis Allan and Ethel Hobday (Voc. D.02042-92093), (b) Marjorie Hayward and Una Bourne (H.M.V. C.988), *Allegretto and Allegro*: Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1149). Everybody loves this sonata. I understand that the Columbia version will soon be complete, but my own preference goes strongly in favour of the Vocalion version.

GRIEG.—*Sonata in F, Op. 8, Allegro con brio and Allegro molto vivace*: Daisy Kennedy and Hamilton Harty (Col. L.1440). A snippet, but a very charming snippet.

GRIEG.—*Sonata in G, Op. 13, Allegretto tranquillo and Allegro animato*: Daisy Kennedy and Hamilton Harty (Col. L.1440). Another charming snippet.

GRIEG.—*Sonata in C minor, Op. 45, Allegro molto ed appassionato, Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza*: First two movements. (a) Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1079), (b) Sammons and St. Leger (Voc. A.0113, 0149), (c) Jan Rudenji (Pathé 5489). All three movements arranged by Tertis for viola and piano. Tertis and Ethel Hobday (Voc. D.02104, 02106, 02112). I give a strong vote in favour of the Vocalion version of the first two movements. A really splendid piece of recording. In one of my reviews I did less than justice to the arrangement of the complete sonata for the violin and viola by Tertis. I now consider it to be one of the great recording triumphs of the gramophone. This I should be tempted to recommend to beginners as the first complete work of chamber music in which to invest. There are several good rich tunes, and when he begins to find them a little too rich he will be ready for some Brahms.

JOHN IRELAND.—*Sonata No. 2 in A minor, Allegro, Poco lento quasi adagio, Moderato con brio*: Catterall and Murdoch (Col. L.1322-3). These are charming records. I did not enjoy this sonata for a long time, but I enjoy it now, although it seems somehow to lack individuality.

MOZART.—*Sonata in A, Op. 18, No. 1, Allegro molto, Andante, Presto*: Catterall and Hamilton Harty (Col. L. 1494-5-6.) This is an exquisite work, and as soon as the beginner enjoys this I recommend him to get the Beethoven *Spring Sonata*. I enjoy the same kind of emotion from both of them.

PURCELL.—*Golden Sonata for two violins*: Isolde Menges and William Primrose (H.M.V. D.889). Perfect music, perfect playing, perfect recording.

PURCELL.—*Sonata in G*: Marjorie Hayward and Mme Adami (H.M.V. C.935). I find this rather dull; my bad taste.

RACHMANINOFF.—*Cello Sonata in E flat, Op. 18, Slow Movement*: Salmond and St. Leger (Voc. A.0115). I find this dull.

SCHUMANN.—*Sonata in A minor, Op. 105, Molto appassionata, Allegretto, Vivace*: Daisy Kennedy and Hamilton Harty (Col. L.1338). A stupendous scratch makes the present records almost intolerable. I wait anxiously for a much better recording of one of my favourite pieces of music.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

(To be continued.)

[Note.—Since writing this I hear that the Hayward-Bourne records of the *Kreutzer Sonata* are withdrawn by H.M.V. and the Schumann *Sonata in A minor* by Columbia.—C.M.]



Sigrid Onégine

With reference to Mr. Chapman's letter on page 254 of the last number, Mr. Herman Klein writes:—

"In reply to Mr. Chapman's query about Sigrid Onégine's voice, I was not aware that Chappell's had officially described her as a contralto. If they have, that is probably the reason why Mr. Compton Mackenzie did not take the trouble to call her anything else. For my own part, I do not consider her a genuine contralto, but am perfectly willing to call her a 'mezzo-contralto' with a 'high mezzo-soprano' range; and, as her compass is evidently exceptional, that is probably the correct description. Contraltos do not, as a rule, stick in high B flats for choice to finish a song with, and when they do anything so inartistic in *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix*, I feel entitled to call them anything I please. Besides, when all is said and done, the piece was written for a mezzo-soprano, and it always tends in a record to impart the timbre of that type of voice rather than the lower type."

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Mozart in Excelsis—"Deh vieni"

MOZART, and yet more Mozart! The ever-growing demand is one of the features of modern musical life. It rivals the appreciation of the Elizabethan composers as the greatest musical revival of our times. I would not degrade aught so deep and abiding as the renascent love of Mozart by describing it as a "craze." Besides, it started about a half a century ago—in other countries before this—and "crazes" are not, as a rule, things that come to stay. I merely quote the term as an indication of the rapidity, the intensity of the spread of this healthy artistic disposition; also because it is reaching places where it never penetrated before and taking new forms in order to do so. By "new forms" I mean, of course, the gramophone and, in a lesser degree, radio-broadcasting; for it must not be supposed that more is being done to-day to popularise Mozart in the opera-house or the concert-room than was done in the seventies and eighties of the last century. It is only that the concert area has widened and, thanks to the musical schools which teach thousands where they used to teach hundreds, the public has grown infinitely larger. When I was a youngster—*Eheu fugaces!*—I was plentifully nourished on Mozart symphonies at the Crystal Palace or the Philharmonic Concerts and Mozart quartets and quintets at the dear old "Pops" at St. James's Hall.

But what of the Mozart operas? Are we hearing them performed so much more frequently nowadays? On the whole I fear not. I have been looking through the lists of all the Covent Garden seasons so carefully drawn up by Mr. Richard Northcott in the recently-published revised edition of his charmingly illustrated book,* which covers the period from 1888 to 1924. Now I am quite sure that in the twenty years preceding this period the performances of the three great Mozart operas at Covent Garden and the old Her Majesty's Theatre reached as high a total as they did (allowing for the War) in these last thirty years. I have not space to prove it here and now; I can only state the figures as counted from Mr. Northcott's brochure, and they are as follows: *Don Giovanni*, 104; *Marriage of Figaro*, 28; *Magic Flute*, 12; *Il Seraglio*, 1; and *Bastien et Bastienne*, 3. Of course the disparity between *Don Giovanni* and the other operas, excluding the last-named, would be less striking if this calculation included the

Beecham and B.N.O.C. performances at Drury Lane and His Majesty's, where the *Don* was omitted in favour of the other three named. Still, even then, *Don Giovanni* would continue to head the list, as it has always done. It is only quite latterly that *Figaro* and the *Magic Flute* have regained some of their former popularity. Whereas there was never a season at Covent Garden without *Don Giovanni* from 1882 to 1907, there were no fewer than 13 when the *Marriage of Figaro* was not given at all, while the *Magic Flute* was only remounted once in 1888 and not again until given in English by the B.N.O.C. in 1922. I think I am right, therefore, in asserting that, so far as opera is concerned, the modern growth in the love of Mozart has not been so remarkable as is generally supposed or, indeed, as one had the right to expect.

Mozart's operatic version of Beaumarchais' immortal comedy, *Le Mariage de Figaro*, is one of the masterpieces of musical art, and the aria, *Deh vieni non tardar*, is among the most brilliant gems scintillating in a glorious score. It is Susanna's great moment; the one moment in the opera when she is really serious; when she has something to sing that is the expression of her true self, that places her alone "in the limelight" as a woman and a vocalist. The music is the purest imaginable Mozart, and difficult for any but the perfect Mozart singer to do justice to. Hence the fact that there are few first-rate records of this piece, as I have lately discovered in trying over a collection of five or six, gathered, most of them, from the H.M.V. It can only be sung in Italian—the language to which it was composed—because unfortunately no other language renders it with equal beauty and no translator who has yet appeared can find an English equivalent that does not sound ridiculous. Another trouble is that if sung at the proper tempo it is rather long for one record; so that either the exquisite recitative is omitted (which is a sin) or the few bars of orchestral introduction leading to the air are left out. In one case the whole thing is liable to be sung too slowly or, in the other, too fast; and neither gives us the true effect. However, it is useless to be hypercritical on this point, and I will register my opinion of each record without regard to the question of tempo.

I begin with Marcella Sembrich (H.M.V., D.B.433), one of the great Susannas of her day and probably the only one of them to leave a gramophone record

* Covent Garden and the Royal Opera. By Richard Northcott. The Press Printers, Long Acre, W.C.

of this lovely melody. I know not when it was made, but I do know that the famous artist was no longer in her prime when she sang it. She takes too many breaths; the voice is occasionally doubtful in intonation and unsteady in tone; some of the passages sound very laboured. There is no recitative; but the air is most artistically phrased, and the interpretation, so far as it goes, is in accordance with the best traditions. Both this record and that of Selma Kurz (H.M.V., D.B.500) came out well on the Sonora Model, that is to say, with purity and clearness; while the renderings are very similar save for the cadenza or interpolated turn leading to the B flat, with the scale down to C, which Mme. Sembrich would never introduce; but the majority of Susannas do because it is pretty and effective. Selma Kurz does not maintain an absolutely steady line, and she becomes sharp on her head notes (particularly in that very cadenza), but her singing is expressive and betokens the experienced artist.

Graziella Pareto (H.M.V., D.B.567) gives us two good things—the recitative, *Giunse alfin il momento*, and the strictly correct ending. On the other hand, her over-enunciated consonants (rare fault!) destroy the tenderness of a Susanna in love, while her undue haste is not that of a wife burning to greet her lawful husband so much as anxiety to get her song over before he arrives. Her rhythm, too, is faulty; her *legato* lacks the true *bel canto* of the Mozartian school; and lo! she sings not one solitary *appoggiatura*, but apparently makes a virtue of never raising the penultimate note, as if *Deh vieni* were from Bach's *Passion*. I like this clever singer much better in her modern Italian airs, which the Milanese teachers know a great deal more about than they do about Mozart. Almost identical criticism applies to the version of that excellent vocalist Lucrezia Bori (H.M.V., D.B.153) with the added remark that she is too free with her *portamento* and plays sad tricks with her *rubatos* and *rallentandos*—flighty little touches that this, of all music, positively will not stand. Otherwise both these last records are admirably made, and both sound wonderfully well on my Columbia Grafonola, which brings both voice and accompaniment into perfect relief.

Another, by Kathleen Destournel (Voc., C.01087), has many features to recommend it, notably a clear, resonant tone, exceedingly neat phrasing, and a bright musical style, with plenty of swing yet no lack of feeling. A trifle more suavity next time, greater smoothness in the vowel tone, with the recitative added and the cadenza omitted, and I fancy this singer could contrive to achieve a wholly delightful *Deh vieni*. When all is said and done, it is a very exacting as well as divinely beautiful air, and worth any amount of trouble in order that in the end the perfect result may be attained.

I have received from the Columbia Company a series of extremely fine records made by Cesare

Formichi, the Italian baritone who created something very like a sensation on his début at Covent Garden last June. He came here with a big reputation, added to a reputation for "bigness," and the magnitude of his organ amply justified both. He compares in my mind with such tonal giants of the past as his compatriot Navarrini, the Frenchman Lassalle, the Dutchman Van Rooy, the Polish Edouard de Reszke, singers of the eighties and nineties who left no records of their phenomenal voices for the present generation to enjoy. It is striking evidence of the progress made with the gramophone that the recording instruments of to-day should be capable of "taking" voices of this calibre at full pressure and within normal distance. The result in Signor Formichi's case is a tone of such stentorian proportions that it needs to be modified in an ordinary drawing-room by the use of a half-tone needle; otherwise it is quite powerful enough to fill a good-sized hall without extra enlargement. In fact, so extraordinary is the penetrating opulence of the solo voice that for bars at a time it completely obscures the splendid accompaniments conducted by Mr. Hamilton Harty and Mr. Albert Ketelbey, which could not very well be bettered. When the balance is right, however, it is very good indeed, and I advise Signor Formichi when he next sings for the Columbia to bear this point in mind.

The present series consists of seven double-sided discs, two 12in. and five 10in., the former comprising two excerpts from *Rigoletto*, one from *La Tosca*, and one from *Otello*. The *Cortigiani* and *Pari siamo* (L.1578) are both magnificent examples of the best school of Verdian declamation; the breathing, the physical stamina, the alternating gusts of fury and tenderness are alike remarkable. All the traditional points are easily made, and if Signor Formichi did not frequently "scoop" up to his notes when he puts menace into his utterances there would really be little fault to find with his singing. But for this blemish, indeed, his rendering of Iago's *Credo* would be beyond criticism, and anyhow, it is a superb effort. The *Tosca* excerpt is from the finale to the church scene of Act I., and its effect with chorus, bells, and orchestra is one of immense sonority. There are two more bits from *Tosca*, both from the supper scene, *Ella verrà* and *Già! mi dicon venal* (D.1489), these being perhaps the nearest approach to a solo that the wicked Scarpia was vouchsafed—and, I suppose, all that he deserved. Both are well sung and convey the necessary idea of villainous devilry. Concerning the *Pagliacci Prologue* (D.1487), it is only essential to emphasise the exceptional depth of contrast in the colouring of the familiar phrases; so, too, with the still more hackneyed *Di provenza il mar* (*La Traviata*) (D.1488), with which is coupled the brief duet, *Signor? va, non ho niente*, in which *Rigoletto* is accosted by Sparafucile, here represented by Fernando Autori.

For the rest, I can distinctly recommend Signor Formichi's French records, not so much for his accent as for the sweetness which the language seems to import into his voice. One gets here a sympathetic "covered" tone which is often absent from his Italian. The two airs from *Thaïs* (D.1490) are

well worth listening to; and even finer is the *Légende de la Saule* from Massenet's *Jongleur de Notre Dame* (D.1491), which record also provides a stirring delivery of the air for the High-Priest from *Samson et Dalila*.

HERMAN KLEIN.



ANOTHER REVIEW of PIANO RECORDS

By HAROLD F. BISS

THE Pianoforte Records Tests described in the December number of THE GRAMOPHONE must have come as a long-expected pleasure to many of its readers. They have undoubtedly been carried out in as thorough and logical a method as could be desired, for which Mr. Hunter Blair and his colleagues deserve our congratulations on their interesting and valuable data. During the past few years pianoforte recording has undergone wonderful developments, and although there is still room for further improvements in many directions, we must look ahead of the recording instrument and concentrate a little more upon our pianists and their form of technique. It would be unfair always to blame the recording room experts for bad records when we have to remember that they have often to contend with pianists of international reputation—self-styled laws unto themselves—who, by reason of their stubbornness, would wring profanity from the angel Gabriel.

Logical reasoning alone must be sufficient to show that once a good recording system is adopted by a company, it is not going to be discarded every month in favour of a new one. Yet how often does one find in a monthly supplement of a certain company an astoundingly fine example of pianoforte recording, while in the next month's supplement a vile specimen will appear, the tone of which could easily be mistaken for that of a Jew's harp or banjo—anything but the fine-toned concert grand used in the previous month's record? However, I will wager that as a general rule the same piano actually is used to produce both discs. This inconsistency in recording is of only too frequent occurrence; and how vilely disappointed one feels on hearing a long-expected masterpiece brutally murdered and spoilt by a pianist who records with a harsh jangling tone, whereas another executant may have recorded, years ago, a cut portion of the same work, with greatly superior results!

In actual practice there would appear to be in use two more or less distinct forms of pianoforte technique, i.e., the muscular relaxation method and

the rigid wrist method; and for years eminent professors have raged in unleashed fury upon the merits and demerits of the two methods. Even as I write, I am wondering if I shall be so unfortunate as to cause the ever-smouldering hecla of the ancient controversy to burst into flame. If this should happen, I shall fly immediately to the Hebrides, there to console myself with Fiona Macleod until all is well again. However, I will be bold enough to repeat the actual statement made to me by one of the greatest living professors of the pianoforte and the best known authority on the muscular relaxation method: "The *only* truly successful pianists, recording or otherwise, are those who adopt the muscular relaxation method." Mr. Tobias Matthay himself made this statement to me four weeks ago, and I am sure that no man's opinion upon this matter carries more weight than his. He also informed me that up till quite recently he had been conducting a series of experiments for one of the big recording companies, and although he was not altogether satisfied with the system as it stood, he was of the firm conviction that pianoforte recording had a great future before it. When I suggested to him that the pianists were largely to blame, he was in entire agreement.

Of course, there must be many of our readers who are fully conversant with this system, often called the Matthay method, but for the benefit of those readers who are unacquainted with it, I will endeavour to touch upon its main features; space will not allow more than a very condensed mention of this. Needless to say, volumes have been written upon the subject, and to those who may wish to pursue the matter further I would suggest that they obtain a copy of Mr. Matthay's admirable work, "The Act of Touch," which book will tell them far more than my limited space will allow. A brief description of the method would be as follows:—

The hand is held in a "natural" position, the fingers, instead of being stiffened, being allowed to feel the keys loosely, while the wrist muscles are allowed to relax. This is very different from the

rigid cramping poise advocated by professors in the days of our grandfathers. The fingers must "weigh" the keys, a practice which soon becomes a sub-conscious habit. That this weighing of the keys is of vital importance is conclusively proved when one appreciates the fact that no two pianos respond alike to the touch. The key balance on the Chappell is lighter than that of the Bechstein, although naturally one would not say that one piano had a *better* touch than the other. By weighing the keys in this manner and controlling the volume by the weight of the forearm, any gradation of tone from the most delicate pianissimo to the fullest forte can be produced, yet in each and every case it is possible to attain that wonderful "singing tone" so noticeable in Irene Scharrer's and Myra Hess's playing. In the pianissimo effects, no "woolliness" mars the delicacy of the playing, while in the forte, a rich mellow note is produced, full in volume but not hard. Staccatoed passages are rendered in most cases by quickly releasing the notes after striking, but allowing the fingers to rest lightly on the returned key for a fraction of a second before striking the next key. Perhaps this latter statement is open to criticism, but one must remember that an actual demonstration is far more satisfactory than a written description and far less likely to cause confusion. However, this form of staccato playing is the only one suited to recording, the wonderful smoothness and even progression eliminating the "plucked wire" effect noticeable on many records. Let us remember that a smooth "singing tone" is absolutely necessary if a good record is to be produced.

In the following tests I have taken infinite care, both in the selection of the records and in the careful adjustment of the sound-boxes used. I do not pretend to have actually experimented with sound-boxes in the way that Mr. Blair has done, and I am sure his tests will tell us all that we want to know in that direction, but I will go so far as to say that an H.M.V. and an Orchorsol machine have been used with doped H.M.V. fibre needles. I do not care to say which is actually the best recording pianist, but I would put the following before all others as regards touch: de Greef, Moiseiwitsch, Rachmaninoff, Harold Samuel, Irene Scharrer, and Backhaus.

De Greef.—De Greef in particular has given us some wonderful records, one of the best being the Grieg *A minor Concerto*, but, unfortunately, we are given such a needlessly abridged version. Why in heaven's name the Gramophone Company cut so mercilessly such a beautiful work one cannot imagine. The first part of the first movement is deprived of a great deal of the repetition for which there may be a possible excuse, but the second movement is a disgrace. That wonderful introduction for the orchestra is entirely missing, and that,

in my opinion, deprives us of one of the loveliest parts and leaves us rather "in the air." It is as bad as commencing to read a book at the second chapter. The third movement is deprived of a lot of necessary repetition, but to cut out the lovely sustained melody for the right hand against an arpeggio bass, in the middle of the movement is enough to make Grieg rise from his grave. Also the bright joyous little theme in 3/4 time near the end is missing. Let us hope for a complete recording of the Grieg concerto one day. De Greef plays it with fine feeling and with the easy flowing liquid style so characteristic of him, and there is not a jangle or discordant banjo note to be heard in the whole piece. To me his records always conjure up a mental picture of the Queen's Hall, with all the glamour and excitement of a large audience, the imposing figure of Sir Henry Wood, and the fine handsome old form of de Greef, playing with his usual grace and exquisite refinement. Although we are told that "Encores are not permitted during the first half of the programme," de Greef always has to give one, a favourite of his being the *Seguidilla* of his life-long friend Albeniz. He has made a good, but needlessly cut record of this delightful little piece (H.M.V. E.347). However, it is better than the one by Anderson Tyrer on Velvet Face. Before I leave de Greef, I would strongly recommend his *Hungarian Fantasia* (D.523 and 538), the Saint-Saëns *Second Concerto* (D.533 and 534) (although this is hopelessly cut), the *Variations Symphoniques* of Franck (D.697 and 698), and the splendid records of Liszt's *E flat Concerto* (D.890-893). His other records are fairly good, especially the Schumann *Arabesque* (D.49), but are nearly all old recordings.

Moiseiwitsch.—The best record by Moiseiwitsch is Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau* (H.M.V. D.58), which is without question the finest example of pianoforte recording I have ever heard. It is far preferable to Cortot's rendering, which is too hard and brilliant and altogether lacking in that delicate rhythmic treatment imparted by Moiseiwitsch. The surface on my record (D.58) is not quite as good in the centre as it is on the rest of the disc, and that scratch in the latter portion is inclined to spoil the delicacy of the playing, even if fibres are used.

The pianist does not once forget to keep his muscles under control and not one trace of the hardness produced by rigid wrist playing can be found. Next to this record I would place the *Perpetuum mobile* of Weber (D.735), in which record the piano tone is splendid, and one cannot fail to notice the smooth even progression of the notes. A poor surface rather spoils his record of Debussy's *Clair de Lune* (D.59), although the tone is good and the *Jardins sous la Pluie* on the reverse side is a wonderful piece of recording.

I notice that Mr. Blair speaks well of this record and also of the *Nocturne for the Left Hand only* by

Scriabine. This record has a fine depth of tone, but the centre portion of my record has a poor surface. Another excellent record by Moiseiwitsch is H.M.V. D.588, Chopin's *Waltz in G flat major*, which is very well recorded, the staccato notes being pleasing to the ear and not by any means suggestive of a plucked string.

It is interesting to note that both Moiseiwitsch and Mark Hambourg were pupils of Leschetizky, but how greatly they differ, both as regards technique and interpretation! Moiseiwitsch as a Chopin exponent plays with restraint and fine feeling, but Hambourg plays his works with as much delicacy as would be expected from a cave man with a taste for originality. Moiseiwitsch manages to impart a perfect singing tone into all his Chopin records, the best of which I would say is D.735, the *Impromptu in F sharp*. Above all, be sure to notice in this the singing tone, the perfect restraint and absence of hardness even in the strongest forte, which is absolutely a clear indication of the superiority of the muscular relaxation method which he understands so well. I would strongly recommend readers to attend one of his next recitals, and if it is possible to secure a front or an "orchestra" seat, watch carefully the movements of his hands.

Mark Hambourg.—As regards this pianist, I agree with Mr. Blair that he has given us a fine choice of records, but I cannot altogether agree that he has a good recording touch. Most of his records appear to me to be hard in tone, and his 10in. records are very tinny. I will, however, give him credit for his *Fantasia Baetica* of de Falla (H.M.V. D.766), which is quite an interesting record of a perfect little tone-poem for the piano and thoroughly well interpreted by Mr. Hambourg, although the opening bars are not so well recorded as the remainder of the work, and on my record there is inclined to be a vibration at the very end of the piece. Next to this record I would place Ravel's *Ondine* (H.M.V. D.644), which is a piece particularly well suited to recording. Since Ravel's pianoforte music records so clearly and Mr. Hambourg knows so well how to play it, I am going to ask him to give us a record of the *Minuet* from Ravel's *Sonatina*—a most delightful little example of the effectiveness of modern harmony. On the other hand, I am not going to praise Mr. Hambourg's Chopin. I do not like it in the least, and when I hear his Chopin records, I can always visualise him motoring down from his place at West Worthing to "play to the gallery" on Brighton West Pier, where one can very often see him play as well as hear him!

His records of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* are too old to be fairly judged and are not good specimens, besides being hopelessly cut. I do, however, like the *Italian Concerto*, first movement (H.M.V. D.65), or at least, the small part of it Mr. Hambourg has given us.

Busoni.—I wonder if a more remarkable pianist than Busoni ever lived; such stupendous brain-powers, such powers of interpretation, and above all such a magnificent technique! Yet he was strangely childish, as the following little incident will show. Some years ago Baron d'Erlanger and Busoni were asked to a little dinner at Sir Landon Ronald's (then Landon Ronald's) flat. After dinner Busoni was asked to supply d'Erlanger (who possessed an exceptional gift for extemporising at the pianoforte) with a theme in order that he might witness a proof of d'Erlanger's gift. Busoni said that he was not very interested in such things, and ungraciously refused, until, after repeated pleadings from his hostess, he went to the piano and struck three notes. D'Erlanger thereupon extemporised a very clever set of variations on the three notes, much to the joy and surprise of Busoni. At the psychological moment d'Erlanger said "Now for my revenge, *you* make a fugue, on the same three notes played backwards." Without hesitation, Busoni played offhand a masterly four-part fugue, ending with a grand chorale. Only a musician with abnormal powers of intellect can accomplish such a feat, but I am afraid that I have often wished for a little *less* intellect and more soul in Busoni's playing. All his records are good and his touch perfect, especially the lovely *Prelude and Fugue in C major* of Bach (Col. L.1445). I like de Pachmann's H.M.V. record of Chopin's *Etude in E minor* better than Busoni's; there is a shade more feeling in Pachmann's, although I have both records in my collection and greatly admire Busoni's version. Busoni's playing of Chopin's *Nocturne in F sharp* (Col. L.1432), is, however, not altogether as good as his other records. He relies more upon the sustaining pedal for the opening bars than he need do, and does not get such a smooth and connected succession of notes as would be the case had he played this nocturne with a looser touch. Alas, that we shall never hear him on the concert platform again, nor feel the presence of that strange atmosphere of the man who was so cordial to his friends and who had the strangest laugh—he literally "barked" at one.

Paderevski.—I cannot say that I am altogether satisfied with the choice of music offered us by this pianist. He is a wonderful technician, but does not retain such self control as is necessary for successful recording. Only too often he bangs, and his loud notes are harsh in nearly all his records. The Schumann *Aufschwung* (H.M.V., D.B.376) from the *Fantasiestücke* is impossible, but the *Warum* from the same book is a delightful little piece, H.M.V. D.B. 374. I consider his best record to be the Chopin *Etude in G flat major* (D.A.470), which really displays his wonderful technique better than any other record does. How perfectly he plays the chromatic thirds and the passage in contrary motion!

Harold Samuel.—The two records by this artist are excellent and played wonderfully well. Why do we not get some more Bach from this splendid exponent of his works?

Irene Scharrer.—Her best record is Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C sharp*, which amply portrays the degree of excellence which pianoforte recording has attained. Here the singing tone is perfect and the staccato notes at the beginning of the fugue are played exactly as I have previously described. It is a pity that so many of her records were made years ago, for she has a wonderful touch. It is interesting to note that she is a professor at the Matthay School when her concert tours permit, and all her pupils show the result of infinite pains in teaching. One of them played at the Queen's Hall this year, together with three other Matthay pupils, in a Bach concerto for four pianos; and all received a tremendous ovation.

Other good records of hers are Purcell's *Minuet* (D.622), and *Prelude in F sharp minor* (Chopin) (D.255), and especially the *Etude in E flat major* (D.85), the smooth and liquid tone being unmistakable.

Rachmaninoff.—All this artist's records have a good tone and there is very little trace of hardness noticeable about them. The *Prelude in G minor* (D.B.410), is splendidly recorded, as is also the hackneyed *Prelude in C sharp minor* (D.A.370). After hearing these preludes, amateur pianists should destroy their copies of the score, for Rachmaninoff alone can really play them. *L'Arlesienne Minuet* (D.A.372) is a very clear record and well played. (Rachmaninoff is very original in his interpretation of Bizet and most delightfully pleasing.)

Pachmann.—All his records are good and the *Ballad in A flat* (Chopin), (H.M.V. D.262), is very fine indeed. Next to this record I would place the *Nocturne in F major* (Chopin), (H.M.V. D.263), the forte passages coming out well. The two Chopin mazurkas on H.M.V. E.80 are also very delightfully played, as is also the *B minor mazurka* on Col. L.1102. The *Liebesträume* is not suited to Pachmann, although he uses a very attractive *rubato* in the first cadenza, which, I blush to admit, I have often copied when playing this hackneyed piece in public. I like immensely his record of Henselt's transcription of Raff's *Pileuse* (Col. L.1112), but the Chopin *Mazurka in C major* and *Etude in F major* are much better pieces and have a great beauty and depth of tone. I hope Pachmann will record when he comes to England again, as he says he will in a few weeks' time.

Cortot.—I cannot say that Cortot's records are as smooth and mellow in tone as those of Moiseiwitsch and de Greef. He is a trifle too forceful, too crystal cut and brilliant on the high notes and inclined to be harsh in the middle register. *Carnaval*

(Schumann) is simply vile, and as regards interpretation, as bad as one would expect from an unemotional stockbroker operating a player-piano for the first time.

Debussy suits him quite well, and I rather like the *Children's Corner* (H.M.V. D.B.678/9). The *Cathedral Engloutie* is quite good, but, as Mr. Blair remarks, the bass notes lack the depth and sonority one would expect from a piece of programme music like this, which is intended to depict the sound of bells heard by certain fishermen (or intemperate "long-shoremen") as they sail over the spot where a huge cathedral once stood, long since swallowed up by the inroads of the sea. Even in these records, the piano-tone is far from good. I suppose his best is the Chopin *Berceuse* (D.B.167), and his worst (*Carnaval* excepted), the *Seguidilla* of Albeniz (H. M. V. D.A. 144).

In conclusion, I would say that I should like all readers to try some means to persuade the following pianists to record. Harold Craxton, Adolphe Hallis, Myra Hess, Vivian Langrish, and Désirée MacEwan.

I only wish Miss Harriet Cohen would give us the complete *Symphonic Variations* written specially for her by Arnold Bax and played by her for the first time at the Queen's Hall, in 1920. She is a splendid Bach exponent and a great favourite in U.S.A., but I am sure we could appreciate her better than an American audience. She is a teacher at the Matthay School, as also are the pianists mentioned above who I want to hear recorded before long.

The records issued by the Anglo-French Music Co. are very good, although little known. Tobias Matthay himself records his *Prelude in E* from Op. 16 and Nos. 4 and 6 of his *Six Monothemes*. All the records in their list are as perfect as I have ever heard records, and we have some splendid ones by York Bowen, Egerton Tidmarsh, and Hilda Dederich of highly interesting subjects.

Also the Aco pianoforte records by Maurice Cole and the Vocalion recordings by Sapelnikoff are very fine specimens indeed and deserve the highest praise.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to the Gramophone Exchange (29, New Oxford Street) for lending me such records as I required for this article.

HAROLD F. BISS.

The Christmas Card, which some of our readers have received with the good wishes of the Editor and the Staff, consisted of William Nicholson's picture of "The Growing Colt." It was a charming specimen of the Medici Society's work, and somehow appropriate to the mood in which we bid all our friends and readers

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

CHAMBER MUSIC BY W. A. MOZART

RECORDED FOR THE GRAMOPHONE

Arranged Chronologically together with the Principal Events of Mozart's Musical Life,
and with Notes on Cutting

- 1756, January. Mozart born.
- 1775 *Violin Concerto in A major* (K.V. 219).
- 1781 *Idomeneo*.
- 1782 *Il Seraglio—String Quartet in G major* (K.V. 387): First Movement, H.M.V. (D.560)***; Second Movement not recorded; Third Movement, Columbia (L.1530)**; Fourth Movement, H.M.V. (D.B. 252), Columbia (L. 1460).
- 1783 *String Quartet in D minor* (K.V. 421): First Movement, Columbia (D.1427)***; Second Movement, Columbia (D.1427)***; Third Movement, H.M.V. (D.630), H.M.V. (D.A.174); Fourth Movement, H.M.V. (D.B.251), Columbia (L.1520)*.
- String Quartet in E flat major* (K.V. 428): First Movement, Columbia (L.1043)***; Second Movement, Columbia (L.1043)**; Third Movement, Columbia (L.1044), H.M.V. (D.B.238); Fourth Movement, Columbia (L.1044)*.
- 1784, November. *String Quartet in B flat major* (K.V. 458): First Movement, Columbia (L.1330)***; Second Movement, Columbia (L.1330); Third Movement, Columbia (L.1331)***; Fourth Movement, Columbia (L.1331***, L.1554)†.
- 1785, January. *String Quartet in C major* (K.V. 465): In four movements, complete and uncut, on four records, Columbia (L.1545–8).
- February. *Concerto for Pianoforte in D minor* (K.V. 466).
- 1786, April. *Le Nozze di Figaro*.
- August. *Pianoforte Trio in E flat major* (K.V. 498): First Movement, Vocalion (D.02064)†; Second Movement, Vocalion (D.02015)†; Third Movement, Vocalion (D.02015)†.
- 1787, May. *String Quintet in G minor* (K.V. 516). First Movement, Columbia (L.1362)**; Second Movement, Columbia (L.1363); Third Movement, Columbia (L.1363)**; Fourth Movement, Columbia (L.1364)**.
- August. *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* (K.V. 525). *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major* (K.V. 526): In three movements, complete and uncut, on three records; Columbia (L.1494–6).
- October. *Don Giovanni*.
- 1788, June. *Pianoforte Trio in E major* (K.V. 542): First Movement, Vocalion (D.02064)†; Second Movement, Vocalion (D.02091)†, Columbia (L.1521)†; Third movement, Vocalion (D.02091)†.
- Symphony in E flat major* (K.V. 543).
- July. *Symphony in G minor* (K.V. 550).
- August. *Symphony (Jupiter) in C major* (K.V. 551).
- 1789, June. *String Quartet in D major* (K.V. 575): First Movement, Vocalion (D.02013)***; Second Movement, H.M.V. (D.B. 249), Vocalion (D.02013); Third Movement, H.M.V. (D.B. 254), Vocalion (D.02014); Fourth Movement, Vocalion (D.02014)**.
- 1790 *Così Fan Tutti*.
- 1791, June. *Ave Verum Corpus*.
- July. *The Magic Flute*.
- September. *La Clemenza di Tito*.
- November. *Requiem Mass*.
- December. Mozart died.
- N.B.—I have not been able to identify *Trio No. 7* of which the first and second movements are recorded Vocalion D.02150.

NOTES.

Cutting.—* Indicates a slight and harmless cut. ** Indicates extensive but pardonable cutting. *** Indicates bad cases of cutting. † Indicates that I have not seen the score but believe that these records are cut quite harmlessly or not at all. ‡ Indicates that I do not know how this record is cut. In all other cases the music is uncut. The differing numbers of asterisks indicate my own impressions of the effect of the cutting and are not allotted on any objective system.

Miscellaneous.—I have tried to make the list of recorded chamber music complete as at this date. The other works are mentioned sometimes for their intrinsic importance and sometimes because they, or parts of them, have been recorded for the gramophone.

In sending the above note on Mozart's chamber music, Mr. Francis E. Terry writes as follows:—

"May I call attention to two records which were silently introduced by the H.M.V. Company when issuing their list of double-sided Celebrity records? Record D.B.250 gives Flonzaley interpretations of the first and second movements of the Haydn *Quartet in D major* (Op. 64, No. 5), (only the second movement had been published previously). This is quite the best string quartet record that I have ever heard. The first movement is uncut and interpreted with an amazing combination of brilliance and solidity; the balance of parts is perfect. The second movement contains a substantial but comparatively innocent cut. This record relegates to the rubbish heap the L.S.Q. version (Columbia D.1443), of which the playing is undistinguished and the cutting atrocious. In record D.B.252 a Flonzaley recording of the finale of Mozart's *Quartet in G* (K.V. 387) is paired with the previously issued second movement of the Schumann *Quartet in A major* (Op. 41, No. 3); there is no cutting on either side. The Mozart movement is played with more brilliance, but perhaps less emotional sympathy than in the Lener version (Columbia L.1460), but the Flonzaley interpretation of Schumann is so superior to the drastically cut Lener rendering of Schubert that I should recommend the Flonzaley record in preference to the Lener record.

In general, I think that the Lener Quartet interprets Mozart better than the Flonzaley Quartet. The clarity of Mozart restrains the sentimentalising tendencies of the Lener Quartet, but offers too much temptation to the brilliance of the Flonzaley Quartet."

A GRAMOPHONIST'S GUIDE

By PERCY A. SCHOLES

VI. The Ballet Music of Stravinsky's "Petrouchka," as played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Goossens.

[This article completes the series which Mr. Scholes has contributed to THE GRAMOPHONE, the previous articles being on Brahms' "Sonata in D minor, Op. 108," Debussy's "L'Après-midi d'un Faune," the First Movement of Vaughan Williams' "London Symphony," and Elgar's "Enigma Variations." They have been printed by the courtesy of the Oxford University Press, and will be included in the "Second Book of the Gramophone Record."]

THE recording of *Petrouchka* is a notable event. It gives us all the opportunity of studying and re-studying a piece of music which marks an epoch in the modern history of the art.

Bear in mind in listening to *Petrouchka* that this is ballet-drama music. It is Stravinsky's business-like custom when a piece of such music has for the time served its stage purposes to announce that it is in reality a piece of symphonic music quite able to stand upon its own legs and requiring no longer those of the dancers. The score and parts are then issued for concert purposes, and the piece begins a new commercial and artistic life. This seems to be rather disingenuous. Stravinsky cannot have it both ways. Either a piece was written as symphonically complete and self-supporting, in which case the ballet-drama action is superfluous, or else it was written as accompaniment for a ballet-drama, in which case it will certainly not be found to be self-supporting as a piece of symphonic music.

In the old days, when a ballet was a mere brainless piece of formal human motion, more or less beautiful according to your ideas of beauty, its accompanying music was equally formal and could with ease be detached for separate performances. But the glory of the Russian Ballet is that it has brought brains into ballet, and by this means made it the expression of dramatic thought and emotion. This ballet music composed by Stravinsky is no mere string of dances; it fits all the tiny details of the mimed play as a glove fits a hand. Much of it has more dramatic meaning than musical meaning. It is supremely adapted for its purpose, as a piano accompaniment of a modern song may be, and taken from its action becomes as meaningless as the song accompaniment would be taken from its vocal line and its words.

As a concert piece *Petrouchka* suffers in this way. Stravinsky's rhythms are so compelling and his orchestral colours so vivid that people are glad to hear *Petrouchka* even when they cannot see *Petrouchka*, but unless they know intimately the ballet-drama, and are able to follow with the eye of the mind to supply what is lacking, they must certainly be puzzled.

Stravinsky's score, by its detailed directions upon almost every page, testifies to the nicety with which music and action have been fitted, and this is further admitted by the (rather unexpected) appearance upon the title page of the name of Stravinsky's ballet collaborator upon equal terms with his own: *Petrouchka: Scènes burlesques en 4 tableaux, d'Igor Stravinsky et Alexandre Benois*.

That Stravinsky's music for *Petrouchka*, wonderful as it is, will keep the platform indefinitely without Benois' action for *Petrouchka*, i.e., purely as a concert piece, I do not believe. This *Petrouchka* is but half *Petrouchka*. Even as a half, it is, however, well worth having, for those of us who want to become acquainted with the trend of present-day music, and I can suggest nothing more fascinating for the pastime of an intelligent gramophonist than a careful study of these four records.

In order to help towards this I give below, first a brief synopsis of the ballet-drama, and then a detailed description of it in the words of Stravinsky and Benois themselves, as recorded in the printed score, adding to the latter such indication as to the nature of the music that accompanies each event in the ballet-drama as will enable the listener to trace his way through the music as he hears it, understanding clearly what it is that the music is at any given moment trying to say.

THE PLOT.

A Russian fair is in progress—bewilderingly brilliant and noisy. A magician-showman exhibits three puppets: a dancing girl, a Blackamoor, and *Petrouchka*. To all he has given a sort of fractional humanity, but to *Petrouchka* most. *Petrouchka* then can suffer, and does; he is a pathetic figure, where the Blackamoor is but a brutish dolt and the dancing girl not much more than the pretty doll that such girls sometimes are, even in real life.

Petrouchka loves the dancing girl. The Blackamoor kills him. The public are shocked; the police appear. The magician showman holds up the limp corpse. It is but a puppet after all. The crowd, reassured, disperses. The showman, with the puppet-body *Petrouchka* in his hands, turns to go in. There on the top of the show, grimacing at his creator, is a puppet soul *Petrouchka*. *Petrouchka* has been made human enough to have a ghost!

I do not know how that brief account reads to anyone who has never seen the thing on the stage,

so will just add this word: Amidst all the glitter and bustle of the play there is an evocation of the feeling of sympathy. The helplessness and suffering of Petrouchka are made genuinely pathetic.

THE ORCHESTRA.

The force which Stravinsky employs is as follows:—

Strings.—As usual.

Wood-wind.—Four flutes and 2 piccolos, 4 oboes and cor-anglais, 4 clarinets and bass clarinet, 4 bassoons and double bassoon.

Brass.—Four horns, 2 cornets, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba.

Percussion.—Kettledrums, big drum, small drum (i.e., snare drum or military drum), tabor (= "Tambour de Provence" in the score), cymbals, tam tam, tambourine (= "Tambour de Basque" in the score), triangle, bells, xylophone.

Other instruments.—Two harps, piano, celesta (two players).

THE BALLET-DRAMA AND ITS MUSIC— STEP BY STEP.

Here I give, as promised, the actual indications of the printed score, adding to them such brief descriptions of the music as will enable any reader to follow the intention of the music, well-nigh note for note.

Side I. FIRST SCENE.—*Shrovetide Carnival.*

Prelude. The flute *motif* at the opening is one of the principal *motifs* of the first part of this scene. We might call it the Carnival *motif*.



Curtain rises. A group of drunken men pass, dancing (page 14).

The music changes character here, a rude dance (two-in-a-bar, full orchestra) now opening.

The Showman, from his platform, amuses the crowd (page 16).

A long held brass chord immediately precedes the passage and calls attention to it.

Organ grinder and a dancing girl appear in the crowd (page 19).

A snatch of wheezy organ tune, in clarinets, announces their coming.

Organ grinder begins to play (page 21).

The wheezy organ tune in the clarinets begins in good earnest (a very amusing reproduction).

Girl begins to dance, beating time with a triangle (page 22).

A well-marked organ tune (flutes and clarinets) with triangle punctuating it.

The organ grinder turns the handle with one hand and plays a cornet with the other.

The trumpet doubles the flute-clarinet organ tune.

At the other side of the stage a musical box begins to play, and around it another dancing girl performs (page 23).

A glockenspiel, representing the musical box, weaves in its tune, against that of the clarinet barrel organ.

The first dancing girl begins to use her triangle again (page 24).

The glockenspiel musical box, the flute-clarinet organ, and the triangle are all heard together; celesta (four hands) accompanies.

The organ grinder begins again to play his cornet.

He only plays a couple of bars, however.

The barrel organ and the musical box cease playing and the showman of the fair begins his harangue again (page 27).

The opening flute tune (the Carnival *motif*, as we called it), is resumed momentarily, but in oboes and glockenspiel.

The merry band of drunken men passes again (page 29).

To the same jolly, thumping tune as before.

Side 2.

The Carnival *motif* in flutes and oboes begins this side of the record, and other material from the opening continues it—all rhythmically very forceful.

Two drummers come forward in front of a theatre booth, drawing the attention of the crowd by their drumming (page 39).

As everybody else stops playing, they cannot be missed. The old Charlatan steps in front of the Booth.

The conjuring trick (page 41).

A few bars of a chromatic character, with double bassoon grunts here and there.

The Charlatan plays the flute (page 41).

And a very banal tune he plays—pretty in its way, though.

The curtain of the theatre booth goes up, and the crowd sees three puppets: Petrouchka, a Moor, and a Ballet Girl (page 42).

The chromatic music again, but differently orchestrated.

The Charlatan brings them to life by playing his flute (page 43).

Not a tune this time. Just a little two-note *motif* played three times at different pitches.

Petrouchka, the Moor, and the Ballet Dancer, to the great astonishment of the public, begin to dance together (page 44).

A long, jolly dance, mostly very rowdy, and with great variety of orchestration.

(Curtain.)

Side 3. SECOND SCENE.

As the curtain goes up, the door of Petrouchka's room opens suddenly; a foot projects him on to the stage; he falls and the door closes behind him (page 63).

All that is here described can be read into the music easily enough by an imaginative listener. The passage is, however, better as description than as music, having little definite artistic value.

Petrouchka breaks into curses.

He swears in trumpet arpeggios (just after the passage for piano alone), to the rattle of a small drum and tambourine and some other accompaniment.

The Ballet Girl enters (page 69).

At the place where a couple of bars of piano alone are followed by a much more rapid passage, by strings, wood, and harps.

Ballet Girl goes away again (page 72).

Just at the end of that rapid passage (the clarinet solo immediately follows).

Petrouchka's despair (page 75).

Where the trumpets enter.

The curtain falls (page 77).

As this side of the record ends.

Side 4. THIRD SCENE: *In the Moor's Apartment.*—

The curtain rises (page 79).

Just after the descending chords for three trombones and the long pause with kettledrum taps.

The Moor dances (page 79).

He begins this dancing to the oriental, languorous, impressive, melancholy clarinet tune. (Pizzicato strings and certain percussion effects, as accompaniment). All the music of this dance is very cleverly contrived. It offers a remarkable example of darker tints in orchestration and is rhythmically strong.

Appearance of the Ballet Girl (page 82).

To a cornet motif of three notes.

Side 5.

The dance of the Ballet Girl (page 83).

A battery on the small (military) drum to which is soon added a purposely vulgar cornet tune. A few chromatic bars and a flute roulade follows.

Valse—The Ballet Girl and the Moor (page 84).

This is amusing and delightful. It falls into several sections: (a) A bassoon arpeggio bass, over which soon appears a responsive duet (*cantabile sentimentamente*) by cornet and flute; (b) a harp accompaniment with a sprightly flute tune, into which the cornet soon interjects occasional arpeggios. The cor-anglais and double bassoon (reinforced by pizzicato cellos and double basses) add a gruff counterpoint, some drumming and cymballing therewith; (c) a few bars of chromatics; (d) resumption of the cornet-flute duet, with an intruded

chromatic motif, sometimes in cor-anglais, sometimes in horn, which is like a bit of grit in what has been smooth-running machinery.

The Moor and the Ballet Girl listen (page 89).

A blow on big drum and cymbals, and some long horn notes, with a tremolo in low strings, and a trumpet arpeggio (not heard in this record).

Appearance of Petrouchka (page 89).

Where the cornet enters with the up-and-down arpeggio.

Quarrel of the Moor and Petrouchka. The Ballet Girl faints (page 91).

Bustle music in strings and bassoons—*qua* music very dreary.

The Moor ejects Petrouchka. Darkness falls. Curtain (page 95).

Sharply sounded chords in strings, wood, and horns—very uncomfortable for Petrouchka.

Side 6. FOURTH SCENE: *The Carnival Again.*

Towards Evening. (Page 96).

A joyous hum of tremolo strings and wind, with occasional sweep of upward harp chords, and by and by a touch of tubular bells. A moment's intermission (during which a thin little staccato figure is heard from oboe, clarinet, horn, trumpets) and, *curtain* (p. 101), it starts again. A few bars of concertina-like music from oboes, clarinets and horns, lead to the—

Dance of Nurse Girls (page 104).

Pizzicato strings, with four bassoons wobbling rapidly. A chromatic passage in thirds from first violins soon creeps in, and then an oboe solo of a very happy character—later taken over by horn, and still later by violins.

A very amusing guitar imitation is followed by a few notes of call on the oboe, and then comes a deliciously vulgar stuttering tune on trumpet—and so on.

A peasant enters, with a bear. The crowd rushes towards them. The peasant plays upon his pipe; the bear walks on his hind legs (Page 115).

A cymbal crash (not to be found in the score!) ushers them in, and the peasant begins to play a very high-lying tune on the clarinet (which sounds more like the flute, whilst the bear growls out a tuba tune.

The peasant and the bear move away (page 115).

They soon go, and their going cannot pass unnoticed. The fun of the fair begins again, but more softly.

A drunken citizen comes on with two gipsy girls débauché; he amuses himself by throwing bank notes to the crowd (page 118).

These abandoned people have, nevertheless, a very jolly tune; they are certainly enjoying life.

Side 7.

The gipsy girls dance ; the citizen plays the accordion (page 120).

There is no accordion effect here, which I can recognise as such, though elsewhere in the work (e.g., page 103 of the score, and side 6 of the records) there is. The music at the opening of this record is poor, scrambly stuff, but it is fair to say that an oboe-cor-anglais melody which should give it a little interest is covered up by the string scales.

After a time we hear (all strings in octaves) the jovial tune to which the gipsies and merchant entered in the previous record.

The merchant and the gipsy girls move away (page 125).

They do so to one of the most curious passages in the piece—a figure treated antiphonally by two muted trumpets pianissimo, accompanied very beautifully by a throbbing open fifth from the harps.

Dance of coachmen and grooms (page 126).

Reiterated chords of a curious dry lack of resonance, amidst which short phrases for the various brass instruments in turn (trumpets, trombones, horns, in each case in octaves) pick their way.

The nurse girls dance with the coachmen and grooms (page 131).

The tune of the dance of nurses (page 104 of score, side 6 of records) returns, first on clarinets and bassoons and then on all strings in octaves. There is a shattering little five-chord *motif* for trombones and tuba (later with cornets and trumpets added). A trumpet-trombone tune then enters and the fun grows furious.

The maskers (page 139).

As the last-mentioned tune abruptly ends, a scrambly passage for harps, celesta and wood begins. This develops and a brass call becomes a feature as—
The Devil-Masker persuades the crowd to riot with him (page 142).

The brass call enters here, as above mentioned—with rather sinister effect.

Buffoonery of the maskers—Goat and pig (page 144).

Reiterated chords on strings, with one or two wind bleats and grunts.

The Maskers and the Fancy Dress Revellers dance (page 146).

Where the Glockenspiel comes in.

The rest of the crowd join the maskers in their dancing (page 149).

Where a high horn tune comes in, to a three-note *motif* in pizzicato strings which (the passage being in duple time) is constantly varying its note of accent.

The crowd goes on with its dancing, ignoring the cries which are heard coming from the little theatre (page 150).

Long held notes for muted trumpets and cornets (and no other instruments at all heard) terminating in a tiny trumpet flourish.

Side 8.

This side contains some of the most remarkable orchestration (of the more delicate type) of the whole ballet, and is well worth careful attention.

The dance is broken up. Petrouchka is seen escaping from the little theatre, pursued by the Moor, whom the Ballet Girl tries to hold back (page 151).

A cor-anglais arpeggio followed by two violin "pings," then some very remarkable passages of agitation.

The Moor, in a fury, catches up with Petrouchka, and fetches him a blow with his sword (page 152).

He rushes at him in a downward chromatic violin scale, and smashes his brain-pan in with a bang on the cymbal.

Petrouchka falls—his skull broken (page 153).

He ought to fall with a dull thud made by holding the tabor near the floor and dropping it, but this cannot be heard here.

A crowd collects around Petrouchka (page 153).

The music of lament is very remarkable.

He dies bemoaning his lot. They send a policeman to seek the Charlatan (page 154).

Where the couple of bars of sorrowful violin solo are heard.

The Charlatan arrives (page 154).

At the end of the queer bassoon pom-pom passage (to which the bass clarinet has added one or two grunts of sympathy).

He lifts up the body of Petrouchka, shaking it (page 154).

He lifts it to the descending chromatic wail on the horns, with grunts in double bassoon ; and shakes it to the sound of tremulous strings.

The public dwindles away (page 155).

To what sounds to me like an accordion effect in horns.

The Charlatan remains alone on the stage ; he drags the corpse of Petrouchka towards the little theatre (page 155).

The accordion effect continues.

On the top of the little theatre appears threateningly the ghost of Petrouchka ; he makes a long nose at the Charlatan (page 156).

The ghost of Petrouchka is accompanied by the ghost of a trumpet tune (a small high-pitched trumpet, muted).

The Charlatan, affrighted, drops the Puppet-Petrouchka and rushes off, glancing fearfully behind him (page 156).

To two trumpets playing discordantly a little tune derived from the very opening flute tune of the whole ballet.

(Curtain.)

At the end of the score appear the words "Rome, 13-26 May, 1911." If this means that only thirteen days were occupied in the composition we may be astonished.

It may be of interest to some to see *Petrouchka* placed chronologically in relation to some of its composer's other works:—

<i>The Firebird</i>	1910
<i>Petrouchka</i>	1911
<i>The Rite of Spring</i>	1913
<i>The Nightingale</i>	1914
<i>Symphony of Wind Instruments</i>	1920

(Four large double-sided H.M.V. records, D.853, 854, 855, 856, 6/6 each.)

PERCY A. SCHOLES.



THE CONCERTO COMPETITION

FROM the beginning of the count there was never any doubt as to the winner, and it is a pleasant sign of alertness in responding to popular taste that the Schumann *Piano Concerto* is being issued this month by The Gramophone Co. This concerto left its rivals almost out of sight, and appeared in no less than 94 per cent. of the lists sent in by competitors, while it took first place in 50 per cent. of them. Then came the Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto No. 1*, closely followed by the Fourth Beethoven *Piano Concerto* (in D major) and the Brahms *Violin Concerto* (in D major), which dead-heated; then after another gap the Third Beethoven *Piano Concerto* (in C minor) and the Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto* (in C minor also). It is rather a pity that the competition was not extended to include ten instead of six, because the next four were close up in the running: the Mozart *Piano Concerto in D minor* (K.466), the Elgar *Violin Concerto in B minor*, bracketed with the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto in D*, and lastly the Brahms *Piano Concerto in B flat*. In contrast with the symphony competition last year, an examination of these lists shows no alteration in the order if the "first choices" only are reckoned.

Among other concertos which were favoured by a considerable number of competitors were the Mozart *Violin in A major* (K.414) and *Piano in A major* (K.488), the Grieg *Piano in A minor*, the Max Bruch *Violin in G minor*, and the Haydn *Cello in D*.

Of the lists sent in, not one got the six winners right, even in any order. But no less than nine got five correct. These were Hubert F. Thatcher (Bristol), Sidney Abrahams (London), Albert J. Adams (London), A. L. Casserley (London), S. F. D. Howarth (London), Rev. J. B. McElligott, O.S.B. (York), Maurice W. Bateman (London), George H. Nuttall (Manchester), and H. H. Ensor (Sanderstead, Surrey). MR. THATCHER wins the prize because his first five choices were correct, and though he

omitted the Fourth Beethoven *Piano Concerto*, he gave the sixth place to the next choice, the Mozart *Piano Concerto in D minor*. Mr. Abrahams was close on his heels, putting the Elgar *Concerto* in place of the Rachmaninoff; and Mr. Adams also missed the Rachmaninoff and included the Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat*. Mr. Casserley had the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto in D* instead of the Beethoven *Fourth Piano Concerto*. Mr. Howarth, whose sixth choice was the Bach *No. 2 in C, for three pianos and orchestra*, qualified his daring by the remark that it "may be out of the question at present, but if only the first movement were done what a 'flight of cobwebs there would be'!"

To recapitulate, the following is the list of concertos that we urgently commend to the notice of the recording companies:—

1. Schumann: *Pianoforte Concerto in A minor*, Op. 54.
 2. Tchaikovsky: *Pianoforte Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor*, Op. 23.
 3. Beethoven: *Pianoforte Concerto No. 4 in G major*, Op. 58.
 4. Brahms: *Violin Concerto in D major*, Op. 77.
 5. Beethoven: *Pianoforte Concerto No. 3 in C minor*, Op. 37.
 6. Rachmaninoff: *Pianoforte Concerto No. 2 in C minor*, Op. 18.
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7. Mozart: *Pianoforte Concerto in D minor* (K.466).
 8. Elgar: *Violin Concerto in B minor*, Op. 61.
 9. Tchaikovsky: *Violin Concerto in D major*, Op. 35.
 10. Brahms: *Pianoforte Concerto No. 2 in B flat major*, Op. 83.

THE HALLÉ ORCHESTRA

THE orchestra with which Sir Charles Hallé's name is so closely associated, was founded in 1857 with the title of the Manchester Orchestra. Sir Charles, better known in London as a pianist and originator of the Hallé pianoforte recitals at the old St. James' Hall, brought his band to London on several occasions without, however, much financial success. He was a staunch believer in the greatness of Berlioz but was unable to win over the stubborn British public to this view. In 1888, the year of his knighthood, he married Mme. Norman Neruda as his second wife, and died on October 25th, 1895, after seventy-six years devoted to the spread of good music. Richter succeeded to the conductorship of what was now a famous organisation, adding to it much lustre. After him came, for a short space, Michael Balling and then, during the war, visiting conductors. In 1921 Hamilton Harty, perhaps better known at this period as the husband of Agnes Nicholls, was appointed to the conductorship. Under his very able direction the number of players was increased to 85. Last year the orchestra secured over seventy engagements: an excellent total for these lean days.

London had not heard the orchestra, described by Sir Thomas Beecham as the best in England, for a long while. Their coming was therefore an event of considerable musical importance and in the three quite well attended concerts given at the Queen's Hall, they consolidated the big reputation they have gained in the North with us hard-to-please Londoners.

What strikes one most, at first hearing, is the exceedingly beautiful quality of the strings—Arthur Catterall leads the first violins—and the general technical efficiency of the players. The wood-wind were rather variable: the cor-anglais had a slightly rasping tone and, one night, the clarinets seemed to be uncertain in intonation. Mr. Camden, who at the last concert played a Mozart bassoon concerto, made his ungainly instrument sound positively mellow and beautiful: only once or twice was it the least bit mirth provoking! I thought the brass the weakest department of the orchestra: they showed a lack of brilliance generally. Percussion were good. But it is, given a reasonable measure of competence in the players, the conductor who makes or mars his band. A fine musical intelli-

gence illuminates Harty's work with the baton. He has his men splendidly disciplined and sensitive to his well-controlled gestures and clear beat. His detail is obviously clearly thought out.

He is evidently determined to carry on the Berlioz tradition in the spirit of the founder of the orchestra, for nothing in all the concerts was so outstanding as the playing of Berlioz' *Fantastic Symphony*. Ideas before considered arid—the *idée fixe* of the work in particular, glowed with passion and beauty. The march to the scaffold was terrifying in its grimness: this, for sheer brilliance and power of climax was the high water mark of this last evening.

This composer evidently makes a strong appeal to Harty: with him also Wagner, Strauss, Rimsky-Korsakoff and Sir E. Elgar. I do not find in his interpretations much of the Celtic fervour or mysticism claimed for him.

The records do not, on the whole, give as good an idea of the excellence of the band as one could wish. To me the best ones are those of Handel's *Water Music*, the *Rakosky* march with the truncated *L'après-midi d'un Faune* and the *Cog d'or* excerpt. The Handel sounds even better than in the concert hall where it seems somewhat over-scored. Sometimes the balance, as in Ravel's *Empress of the Pagodas*, is bad: at other times there is a decided thinness in the wood-wind: the Strauss records are disappointing in this respect. I believe the first



HAMILTON HARTY

side of the *Largo* in Dvorák's *New World Symphony*, in which the brass had a serious lapse in pitch, has been re-done. These records still seem to be only fairly successful. I hope Mr. Harty will give us records of Berlioz' *Fantastic Symphony*: the brilliant, absolutely sure orchestration should come out well and the work is a classic in its kind. But I beg of him not to attempt Delius: he was miles away from the inner essence of *Brigg Fair*: indeed, only the beautiful tone of the strings rescued the performance from artistic disaster. The wood-wind opening passages were very clumsy.

Everyone seemed to have enjoyed the concerts, so one hopes a return visit may soon be arranged. I trust that some of the time will be spent in the Columbia recording rooms, but please, Mr. Harty, pay as much attention to the detail of your records as to that of your performances in the concert room.

N.P.

BLAST

By C. BALMAIN

I HOPE our genial Editor will not repeat the above with too much emphasis when he realises my delay in meeting his wishes in the matter of a few notes on horrible sounds.

Blast, rattle, shake, or any of the various terms by which unwanted sounds in gramophones are designated, is a subject which has not received the attention from manufacturers which it warrants and such knowledge as they have acquired the companies religiously keep to themselves. The most striking instance of this relates to the very important point of correct angle at which the needle should lie. It is true that the big firms design their machines to play at a certain angle, but they do not say what that angle is. Though the companies know that their records are played on all sorts of good and bad machines, they do not warn the public against playing their records at angles far removed from those at which the records were cut. It might be inferred that the recording companies had not made up their minds as to the correct recording angle, and that therefore they were not in a position to lay down the law. Of course other inferences might be made by evilly disposed persons, but what a pleasant surprise it would provide for us were we to open the pages of next month's GRAMOPHONE and find therein an announcement, by one of the big firms, to the effect that users who wished to preserve their records indefinitely should not play them at an angle of less than—shall we say—60°.

This may appear a digression from our subject but it is not so, as will be seen later. To return to our muttons; blast may be the outcome of any of the following defects in recording or reproduction:

In recording. Too thin a diaphragm in the recording sound-box will cause an overcutting of the wax, which will in the record reproduce as blast. This is beyond remedy and the issue of such records is inexcusable. The incorrect disposition of the instruments in a brass band by their dispersal over too wide a front will cause horn echoes of such acute nature as to resemble blast.

In reproducing. The first mentioned cause—thin diaphragms—may lead to further failures in reproduction. Overcutting, though it may not result in blast immediately, may do so in time, through the breaking down of the thin walls of the record track after the record has been played a few times.

Air bubbles or blisters, resulting at first in a knocking sound, will rapidly develop into blast, through the action of the needle in breaking down the edges of the hole and so forming a grinding

substance which results in further deterioration of the record track.

The absence of a "run-in" or "lead-in" line at the outside of the record will, in time, lead to blast because of the gradual breaking down of the outside line of the track through the needle being forced on to the record by hand, instead of running in on a leading line. Such crumbling of the outside edge of a record is facilitated by the method of construction used in some cases. The edge is more fragile and loosely knit owing to the fact that, instead of being evenly and uniformly rolled in sheets, the shellac, etc., is flattened by pressure from the centre and thus tends to become less compact at the edges.

Wrong needle angle will cause blast, as a needle set at a sloping or gliding angle cannot, in all cases, follow the vertical sinuosities of the track made by the recording stylus in the original wax. It is, in effect, being hit by different angles of the track (1) at its point, and (2) at the portion engaging with the top of the groove in the record. It should not be forgotten that the needle is being hit—not is hitting—and to reproduce accurately the sound waves imprinted on the record, the needle must be hit in a direction strictly at right angles to a line drawn through the pivot points of the needle holder. Unfortunately, in commercial practice, the needle is hit only once correctly during its journey across the record track. On either side of this one point, the needle is being struck at an increasingly oblique or incorrect angle and, owing to this flaw in constructional detail, the needle is unable, on certain notes of very short wave length, to respond sufficiently rapidly to the impetus delivered by the record track, and blast or muzziness of tone results. Too thin a needle will cause blast by its inability to deliver to the diaphragm, at the correct speed, the energy imparted to it by the record. It may also develop secondary vibrations, which in themselves are sufficient to cause unwanted noises, quite apart from diaphragm sounds. Too large diaphragms may offend similarly and blast in these may occur from their undue inertia, that is their inability to start delivering energy received and their reluctance to stop vibrating once they start. Thus a second note is being delivered before the first has fully expended itself, and the effect is similar to bad pedal work at the piano. "Lag" is the technical name.

A loose needle bar will cause blast; see that the centre screw and pivot points do not rattle. Needle loose in the holder is another cause and is usually the result of a semi-stripped screw.

A loose fit between sound-box and tone-arm will cause blast. A loose adapter will have similar tendencies. A loose fit at the swing point of the swan neck or main bearing of the tone-arm will also cause rattle—remedy, thick oil or grease.

Loose horn joints or connections or too flimsy construction of horn, either internal or external type, will cause buzz or rattle. Remedy, insulating tape tightly wound. Shellac varnish is also useful.

These are some of the causes of blast, and it will, I hope, be apparent that the alleged expert who claims to be able to put the blasting disease right "in a jiffy," should be regarded with suspicion.

The cure of blast is a troublesome affair at best, as, after all the likely causes in one's own machine have been investigated without success, it is not possible to say positively that the blast is in the record, it may merely be the effect of "interference" due to the acute bends in tone-arm or amplifying chamber of our machine. That there is only one cure for this special disease, as I have before shown, is indicated by the introduction of the snake-like form of horn in the latest successful machines and the novelty does undoubtedly go some way towards a solution of the trouble.

C. BALMAIN.



Children Who Hate Music Lessons

The Gramophone to the Rescue

By ORGILL MacKENZIE

IT is "roses, roses all the way" for the modern child. The word "education" declares itself true to its Latin derivation. It is a leading out and not a hammering in.

Lessons have become delightful. Every pill has a sugar coating. In fact, there is often more coat than pill. The music lesson has somehow escaped this sweetening influence. Dreary exercises for a long hour at a time have bred hatred of music in many a small heart.

To become anything of a performer one must begin young. The first step towards making a child learn is to make him want to learn. That means he must love music; that means he must hear music constantly in congenial circumstances; that means you must give him a gramophone!

A gramophone is an ideal toy for the nursery. It is better than wireless, for the child can, within limits, choose what he wants to hear. He can have the same tune over and over again. He can react to the music. He can help to manipulate the machine—which is a great joy.

At a concert repetition is avoided as if it were one of the seven deadly sins. Everything, even for most grown-ups, is distressingly unfamiliar and desperately long. The child is a passive agent—a rôle for which he has little liking. Sitting still for any length of time is sheer punishment. But in the nursery he can shout and dance, sing, strut, laugh, pretend. He enjoys the music as a savage enjoys it, and thus the sooner will enjoy it as the critic does. He educates himself. He lays up a store of happiness where so many people store polite lies and affectations.

Let him begin with nursery rhymes, good comic songs, stories, band marches. Give him, besides, as good a selection of the world's best music as you can afford—not just what *you* like, but all kinds—only never too many at a time.

Some children will never get beyond appreciation of comic songs and jazz music. The really musical child will change his favourites from time to time. He can appreciate the best at a surprisingly early age.

Investment in a good gramophone would be an economy for many parents. It would save the present waste of music fees for unmusical children. It would make the musical child clamour to learn. He would find heroes whose performances he would practise to rival. He would hear pieces that he would want to play. He would, in consequence, learn the same amount in half the time.

Weary mothers find the gramophone almost as good as a nursemaid. Fathers who want to keep up their reputation for omniscience learn a great deal about music and composers and performers. They have to, in order to answer all the questions asked. They, too, will probably come to a truer love of music.

If the gramophone becomes a universal toy, our concert-halls will be filled one day, as never before, by intelligent and appreciative audiences.

There was a gramophone in the Queen's Doll's House at Wembley. Will it set the fashion? Of the millions who looked at it there were surely at least hundreds who said, "What a good idea! I must get one for Peter and Jean."

ORGILL MacKENZIE.

"ADAPTED" PATHÉS

By JOHN C. W. CHAPMAN

THIS article deals with the attainment of good reproduction of the sapphire phono-cut on ordinary gramophones. Those enthusiasts who extol the virtues of the needle-cut to the exclusion of everything else are advised not to read it.

The Pathé disc is really a hybrid, containing many phonographic as well as gramophonic characteristics. It has shallow U-shaped grooves, along the bottoms and sides of which lie the soundwaves. Consequently it is essential for the gramophone to be on a perfectly even keel, and this should be ensured by the use of a spirit-level. Because of the position of the soundwaves a soundbox *facing the track* must be used—though I have seen a small attachment for needle-cut sound-boxes that yields a somewhat unpleasant reproduction. The elbow bend on Pathé "Universal" reproducers fits H.M.V., Columbia, and Continental-type tone-arms; I believe there is also a special "goose-necked" box provided for H.M.V.; and there used to be a "Marathon goose-neck" to bring the Exhibition sound-box to a Pathé-playing position.

With regard to "goose-neck" tone-arms, it is often necessary to enlarge the aperture, as the Pathé box tends to raise the "goose-neck" to an extent causing the upper rim of the aperture to partially close the tone-arm sound-channel. In the case of external horn machines it is an easy matter to satisfactorily accommodate a Pathé sound-box by raising the tone-arm bracket about an inch, thus avoiding alterations to "goose-necks" and allowing for the limited vertical movement possessed by most Continental type tone-arms on this kind of gramophone. On Columbia Grafonolas having annular cup at end of tone-arm elbow it is advantageous to use that handy and inexpensive little fitment the Columbia-Continental adapter.

When in position the face of the Pathé box should be vertical, and the arc traversed by the tone-arm across the disc should bring the sapphire to not more than half an inch in front of the turntable shaft; otherwise imperfect reproduction and undue wear towards the centres of discs, combined with a tendency of the sound-box and tone-arm to skid, will result.

Let us now consider the various Pathé sound-boxes and sapphires. The "Playall" device used on Pathé machines does not come within the scope of this article. I am not at all partial to the present "Universal"; it comes too far forward and is thin and strident in tone. There are still a good many of

the old ebonite "Universals" about, and though they are not so powerful as their brass-bodied brethren, they yield a very pleasing tone. The aluminium "Multitone" is an excellent reproducer, but I prefer the heavier brass "Concert," a sonorous monster giving admirable definition and breadth of tone. It is highly important that the stylus bar tensioning should be understood, as this is a "blast-point" which can be easily treated. It is of the highly efficient horizontal pivot system, and the nut-locking screws should be adjusted so that they grip the stylus bar tightly enough to prevent lateral shake or wobble, while allowing it to act easily on the diaphragm. A spot of oil on the point of each screw is beneficial when adjusting; and a tiny disc of thin rubber on each side of the centre hole of the diaphragm (if the stylus-arm screw is long enough) is preferable to wax. I have not tried the "Ultone" sound-box, but it is doubtless a high-class production.

I intensely dislike the blare and scrape of the brass-set sapphire, and do not recommend anyone to use it unless they wish to annoy their neighbours. Neither do I advise the playing of Pathés with steel needles; apart from damaging good records, a V point is obviously out of place in a U groove, and this remark also applies to fibres, though it is true that fairly decent results can be achieved with the bamboo stylus. Ample volume, a very natural and mellow tone, and little surface noise are the desirable properties of the ivory-set sapphire (nominally "half tone"), and I regard it as quite the best stylus for Pathés. These few hints should help to achieve good Pathé reproduction on almost any gramophone; but the best "adapted" Pathé results I have heard have been on the Columbia Grafonola and Kestraphone.

Compared with the French Pathé catalogue which literally bulges with good things—many of them unobtainable on any other records—the English list is, in the main, a depressing pamphlet. Engulfed in an ocean of dance music, popular ballads, vapid "jazz" ditties, "stock" overtures, and the like, are to be found some choice operatic records (including three complete operas), which have surreptitiously sneaked across the Channel, by such artists as Cavalieri, Calvé, Muzio, Burzio, Chénal, Yvonne Gall, Fanny Heldy, Galvany, Aline Vallandri, Ninon Vallin, Muratore, Schipa, Franz, Giorgini, Constantino, Vaguet, Sammarco, Taurino Parvis, Noté, Ancona, Affre, Didur, including some fine duets and quartets by the above and other famous singers.

The cream of the French recordings could doubtless be easily obtained through the English firm.

The military band enthusiast is well catered for by the Garde Républicaine and Pathé and Imperial Military Bands. There are a few very good records by the Imperial, Lamoureux, and Pathé Symphony Orchestras, but as a rule orchestral discs are not up to the standard of other famous recording houses. There is some fairly good chamber music by the Rosé and Dutch String Quartets. I am not at all keen on Pathé instrumentals, but fine records are available by Hollman ('cello), Ganz, Leginska, and Lhevinne (piano), and Thibaud, Débrulle, Ranzato, and the late Jan Rudenyi (violin). The dance music is uniformly good. There are some capital songs by Rosina Buckman, Helen Yorke, George Baker, Cecil Sherwood, Jamieson Dodds, and Robert Howe, and a decidedly humorous "Trial Turn Matinée," by J. P. Ling.

Treated with reasonable care, good specimens of

Pathé records will wear almost indefinitely without marked deterioration. Unfortunately there are some in which grey, rough patches appear (due, doubtless, to faulty material), considerably shortening their lives. While some of the older records have rather noisy surfaces, the later issues show a great improvement in this respect. There are several discrepancies in the prices of the same recordings issued on Pathé and Actuelle, of which the most notable examples are to be found in the Yvonne Gall, Schipa, Claudia Muzio, and Fanny Heldy discs. What few are done on Actuelle are priced at 4s. and 6s., as against 7s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. on Pathé! One also comes across absurdities like six sides of Messenger's *Two Pigeons* on Actuelle, of which only two have found their way to the sapphire disc. Still, in spite of the above criticisms, I think that a few really good Pathé discs are an asset to any collection.

J. C. W. CHAPMAN.



The Seaside Orchestra and the Gramophone

By JAMES RAINFORD

IT is surprising how many of the small orchestras which abound at seaside resorts may be turned to practical use by many gramophonists, who have not the opportunity to hear the best orchestral concerts. I omit entirely, of course, such orchestras as the Bournemouth Municipal, under Sir Dan Godfrey; the Scarborough Spa, under Mr. Alick Maclean; or the Llandudno Pier Orchestra, under Mr. Payne. These stand in a class apart, but there are many small ladies' orchestras which serve up very attractive little programmes.

True, such programmes, like the curate's egg, are only good in parts, but interspersed between waltz tunes, marches and jazz, one often hears quite creditable performances, on a small scale, of music which, if suitably marked on one's programme, may frequently lead to a real capture for one's gramophone.

All the most famous overtures (except "1812," which, according to a recent illustration in THE GRAMOPHONE, would hardly be safe on the end of a pier!) are frequently played, and give one an excellent idea as to which of them one is most likely to prefer; and, in addition, for beginners, who have only vague ideas as to which tunes are which, (and who are, despite their best endeavours, frequently like the poor old bean in "The Gondoliers" who got the infants mixed up) these small orchestras often solve obtuse problems. Always supposing, of course, that the girl who plays the cornet

doesn't forget to change the number register (which between you and me and the lamp-post she often does!).

I have heard and afterwards obtained records of such little odds and ends as "Schubert's Unfinished Symphony," "Merry Wives of Windsor" Overture, "Ballet Egyptian" (Luigini), Tchaikowski's "Andante Cantabile," "Pomp and Circumstance" (Elgar), "Keltic Suite" (Foulds), and charming pieces by Eric Coates, Percy Fletcher, etc., and many other interesting items, not perhaps in the very top flight, but not to be sneezed at by any whose appreciation of music is advancing slightly.

I have also heard some really excellent violin soli, but usually the 'cello is a dismal failure, owing to the solo being merely a playing over of some sob-stuff ballad, apparently supposed to suit the mournful notes of the 'cello, and as the 'cello is my favourite of all instruments, the result is not good for my health. Still in spite of the little drawbacks from the cornettist and the 'cellist, one feels that some of these small orchestras do quite good work by helping up a few steps of the ladder those to whom music appeals, and whose appreciation thereof has gone a little further than research work into the capacity of spearmint to retain its flavour if left on the bedpost during the hours of sleep, or the obtuse social problems arising from the ability or inability of shrimps to make good mothers.

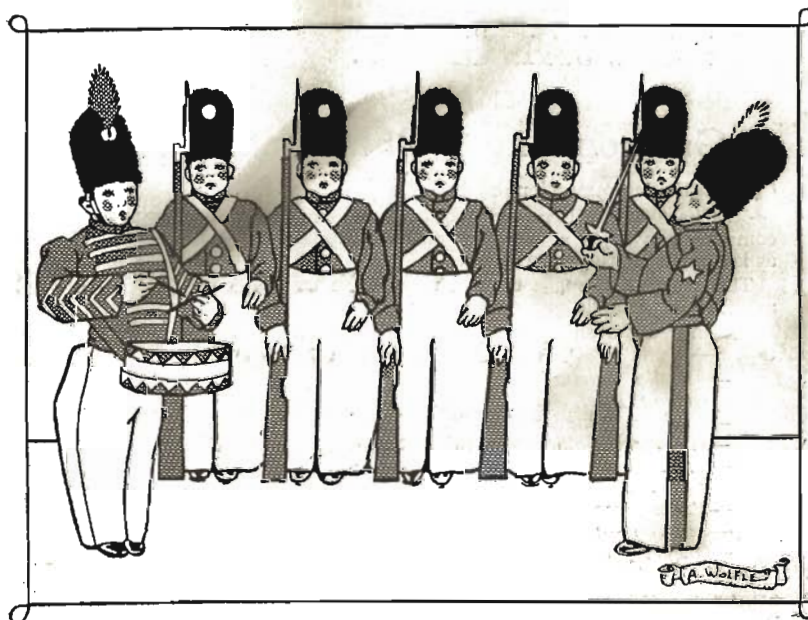
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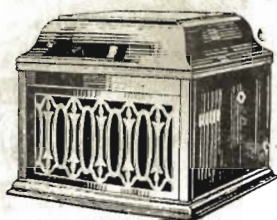
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“WHAT’LL I DO?”

By HARRY MELVILL

ABSENCE abroad, and now a broken right arm have handicapped me for the congenial task of contributing an article on the Dance Records of the year, as I did last year. I crave your indulgence in an immobility, which is irksome both to the writer and the dancer.

While abroad I was in Italy. The Italians dance very well. The Russians, who are delighting others more fortunate than myself at the Coliseum at the moment, owe their inspiration to them. Italian ladies have lovely feet and ankles, and their fellow countrymen are the best shoemakers in the world. But for the modern dancing they are the victims of their bands. *Yes, we have no bananas*, whose pathetic refrain encourages them to accord it the same treatment as that given to the inevitable *Santa Lucia*, was the nearest approach to a real American fox-trot that I heard whilst I was there, except on the gramophone, and *Gigolette* and *Je cherche après Titine* are considered by the Italians perfect examples of the fox-trot formula. *Gigolette*, or, as it is called here, *The Three Graces*, boasts a very pretty air and is still popular here, but to the expert is rendered “suspect” by a polka parentage.

On my return from Italy I paid a visit to some kind friends in the country, but, alas, gone were the days when the gramophone was turned on directly after dinner and immediate dancing benefited one's health and one's spirits. After listening in gloomy silence to a lecture on means of providing continuous sunshine for East-end babies and some rather scratchy violin solos, our host observes, “Cheer up! At 10.30 you will be able to dance to the Savoy bands!” At the appointed hour a noise like the crackling of twigs under a picnic kettle causes our host to exclaim, “Those blasted atmospheres again!” and I then tardily but happily turn on the successful competitor. I am naturally faithful, and my first choice is my 1923 idol, the delicious *When hearts are young*, and then I replace it by the 1924 record, which I must admit has dethroned it, *Linger awhile* (H.M.V., B.1771), also played by Paul Whiteman. Last year the latter's orchestra, as well as Will Vodery's wonderful coons, delighted us, in spite of the Ministry of Labour and the Musicians Union. This year three or four gratuitous performances, one given for the benefit of St. Thomas's Hospital, enabled us to hear two exceptionally good American bands, who played in the charmingly decorated ballroom of the Riviera Club. These were the two orchestras of the United States liner, “Leviathan.” One, conducted by Professor Kraetke, possesses all the Whiteman “zip,” as you can judge from *Little wooden whistle*

(H.M.V., B.1848) and their repertoire includes all the very newest fox-trots, among others *Indian love call*, *Rose Marie*, *A sunkissed cottage*, *Then you know that you're in love*, and *If I can't get the one I want*. The other was the ship's unique Filipino band. The quaint little yellow musicians give to their throbbing banjos a special thrill, and no one who was privileged to see Rudolph Valentino dance the tango to their accompaniment at the Riviera Club will ever forget it.

The mention of the banjo reminds me that that instrument is undoubtedly reasserting itself just when its little brother the banjuléle is making a most successful social “début.” *Nobody but you* (H.M.V., B.1478) and *All alone with you* as played by Vincent Lopez (Parlo., E.5291), are good illustrations of the banjo revenging itself on the long triumph of the saxophone. Many of the year's records have brilliant piano codas, and *Jimjams* and *Justin-tyme* played by Roy Bargy are worthy successors to the same composer's *Pianoflage*.

This time last year I ventured to suggest that the Blues, though much appreciated when sung by Miss Norah Bayes, would be very rarely danced here, and I find that I was right. On the other hand, the dancing-floors of the ever increasing, though evanescent, night clubs, which some of us desire to keep entirely for ourselves, are more than ever invaded by the so-called “Cabaret.” Among those performing in the latter, Brooke Johns with his *Hard hearted Hanna* and *Tessie stop teasing me* (H.M.V., B.1886) and Layton and Johnstone with their *You're in Kentucky, California, here I come*, and *Tea for two*, stand out by their real artistic merit, but I confess I hold no brief for American gentlemen who sing about Montmartre roses, English “soubrettes” who make American noises, or even fairy-like Russian dancers who perform incredible feats of agility in far too close proximity to one's kipper or bacon and eggs.

From time to time paragraphs appear in the newspaper about new dances, but nothing at present threatens to dethrone the all-conquering fox-trot. The waltz, deliciously played by Ambrose and his Embassy band, flourishes more there than elsewhere, but no recent accession to the waltz repertoire rivals the aptly named *Dreamy Melody*. For some time dancing has shown a tendency to grow gradually simpler rather than more complicated. A reaction may set in and fancy steps may once more become the fashion, but, should such be the case, I would advise in the words of Alexander Pope:

“Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.”

National Gramophonic Society Notes

[All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

A "FIRST LIST of Works suggested for Recording" was circulated to members some time ago. It was compiled by the Advisory Committee, and contained the names of three dozen works of chamber music which seemed to be works worthy to be recorded, not yet completely recorded, and not likely to be recorded by the companies in the near future. Members were invited to return the list with comments and indications of their preferences. A great many replied that they considered themselves unable to advise the Advisory Committee and were quite content to leave the decisions that must be made in expert hands. But a fair proportion of members took a great deal of trouble to record their votes by marking the lists in detail, and by adding comments and further suggestions. No particular method of marking had been enjoined upon them, and therefore the returned lists presented a tangle of valuable data which it is almost impossible to reduce to a common standard.

* * *

The first bundle of these lists was sent to Mr. A. C. Rankin, who has before shown his willingness to help THE GRAMOPHONE in any way, at a great sacrifice of his time and patience, and he has forwarded a report to the Advisory Committee which is of immense value in showing the trend of taste among those members who hastened to fill in the list: that is, presumably, among those members who are enthusiasts (because they joined the Society from its start) and experts (because they have a clear idea of the works which they do or do not favour). Mr. Rankin is now preparing a further list of additional works suggested by members for recording.

* * *

Apart from the Schönberg *Septet* and the Schubert *Trio in E flat*, which are already half recorded, the next works on the list in order of popularity are as follows:—

Franck: *String Quartet in D*.

{Mozart: *Clarinet Quintet in G* (K.581).

{Beethoven: *String Quartet in F*, Op. 59, No. 1.

Schumann: *String Quartet in F*, Op. 41.

{Beethoven: *String Quartet in C*, Op. 59, No. 3.

{Beethoven: *String Quartet in E flat*, Op. 127.

Schubert: *String Quartet in C*, Op. 163.

Beethoven: *String Quartet in F*, Op. 135.

{Beethoven: *String Quartet in F minor*, Op. 95.

{Schubert: *Piano Quintet in A*, Op. 114.

{Mozart: *String Quintet in D* (K.593).

Brahms: *String Quartet in B flat*, Op. 67.

That is the first dozen, and it will be noticed that none of the moderns is included, though their supporters are an extremely keen minority. The César Franck *Quartet* was well in front and got about 30 per cent. more votes than the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet*.

* * *

At the moment of going to press it is doubtful whether the Schönberg and Schubert records will be ready for distribution before the February number is out, a matter of as keen regret to Mr. Spencer Dyke and the rest of the Committee as to our members. But in the meantime we are, by great good fortune, able to offer a substantial compensation. Mr. W. W. Cobbett, who has for many years been well recognised as the patron of chamber music in England, has generously added to his other benefactions by undertaking to give a twelve-inch double-sided record to every member of the Society as a Christmas present. The record, which contains a movement from a Rubinstein *Quartet* and a movement from Raff's *Maid of the Mill Suite*, was made by Mr. Cobbett's Quartet specially for the Society; and though it cannot be denied that it comes under the category of "snippets," it is just the kind of record which in the past has formed a path for many a gramophone-lover from the pleasant lowlands to the higher fields of music. We beg in advance to thank Mr. Cobbett very sincerely on behalf of the Society.

* * *

At the same time the little book of recorded Chamber Music will be distributed to members.

* * *

Several groups of music-lovers have already joined the Society, and we hope that as it becomes better known we shall enrol a large number of Gramophone Societies, Schools, Musical Circles, Institutes, etc. It is a happy sign that the records are already being sent to America, China, Australia, South Africa, Egypt, and even Turkey.

* * *

Notice.—"A" (London) wants to become a half-member. He prefers classical to modern but would agree to any arrangement which did not leave him with *all* the moderns.

"B" (in America) wants the same, only that he prefers the moderns.

"C" (Oxford) wishes to transfer the outstanding part of his N.G.S. subscription "owing to change of circumstances."

Will readers with corresponding wishes please communicate with the Secretary?

TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by Mr. H. F. V. LITTLE)

IL LACERATO SPIRITO

(Simon Boccanegra—Verdi.)

Lazarri, Voc., A.0222, 12in., d.s., pink.
 Pinza, H.M.V., D.B.699, 12in., d.s., red.
 Mardones, Col., A.5201, 12in., d.s., l.blue.
 Allin, Col., L.1553, 12in., d.s., l.blue (in English).
 de Angelis, Fonotopia, 92440, 27 cm.
 Norman Williams, V.F. 1114, 12in. (in English).

A te l'estremo addio, palagio altero,
A last farewell to thee, stately palace,

Freddo sepolcro dell'angiol mio!
My angel's cold sepulchre!

Nè a proteggerlo valse!
Nor was I able to protect her!

O maledetto! o vile seduttore!
Oh, the scoundrel! Oh, the vile betrayer!

E tu, Vergin, soffristi rapita a lei la verginal corona?
*And Thou, Virgin Mother, didst Thou suffer her virgin crown
 to be stolen?*

Ah! che dissi? delirio! Ah! mi perdona!
Ah! what did I say? I am raving! Ah! forgive me!

Il lacerato spirito del mesto genitore
Her unhappy father's wounded spirit

Era serbato a strazio d'infamia e di dolore.
Has been reserved for the torture of disgrace and anguish.

Il serto a lei de' martiri pietoso il ciel diè.
Merciful Heaven has given her a martyr's crown.

Resa al folgor degli angeli, prega, Maria, per me,
Among the bright angels, Maria, pray for me,

Resa al folgor degli angeli, prega, Maria, per me,
 Prega per me, prega per me, prega, Maria, per me.

PORGI AMOR

(Le Nozze di Figaro—Mozart.)

E. Heckmann-Bettendorf, Parlophone, E.10163, 12in., d.s.

Porgi amor qualche ristoro al mio duolo a' miei sospir!
Heil'ge Quelle reiner Triebe, gib mir wieder des Gatten Herz!

Love, offer some solace to my sadness, to my sighs!

O mi rendi il mio tesoro o mi lascia almen morir,
 Lass mich sterben, Gotte der Liebe, oder lindre meinen
 Schmerz,

Either restore my treasure to me or at least let me die,

O mi lascia almen morir!

Oder lindre meinen Schmerz!

This is sung twice, and the last two lines are again repeated.
 The English is a literal rendering of the original Italian text.

DOVE SONO I BEI MOMENTI

(Le Nozze di Figaro—Mozart.)

E. Heckmann-Bettendorf, Parlophone, E.10163, 12in., red.

Dove sono i bei momenti di dolcezza e di piacer?
 Nur zu flüchtig bist du verschwunden, freudenvolle, o sel'ge zeit,
Where are the lovely moments of sweetness and pleasure?

Dove andaro i giuramenti di quel labbro menzogner,
 Hin sind jene Rosenstunden, treuer Liebe nur geweiht!
Where are the solemn promises of those false lips?

Di quel labbro menzogner?

Treuer Liebe nur geweiht!

Perchè mai se in pianto e in pene

O dass noch für den Verräter

Why, if for ever into tears and woe

Per me tutto si cangiò, per me tutto si cangiò,

Dieses Herz so zärtlich spricht, dieses Herz so zärtlich spricht:

All has changed for me, all has changed for me,

La memoria di quel bene dal mio sen non trapassò,

Schone seiner, grosser Rächer, strafe seinen Meineid nicht!

Has not the memory of that joy departed from my heart?

La memoria di quel ben non trapassò?

Seiner Rächer strafe seinen Meineid nicht!

Dove sono... to... menzogner.

Nur zu... to... geweiht.

Ah! se almen la mia costanza nel languire amando ognor,

Liebe! führ', ach! aus Erbarmen ihn an meine Brust zurück!

Ah! that at least my faithfulness, loving still in languishment,

Mi portasse una speranza di cangiar l'ingrato cor,

Stehst du mir nicht bei, mir Armen, o dann stirbt mein
 ganzes Glück!

Might bring me the hope of changing his ungrateful heart.

Di cangiar l'angrato cor.

O dann stirbt mein ganzes Glück!

Ah! se almen...

Liebe! führ'...

The English is a literal rendering of the original Italian text.

GIUNTO SUL PASSO ESTREMO

(Mefistofele—Boito.)

Gigli, H.M.V., D.A.222, 10in., d.s., red.

Smirnov, H.M.V., D.B.582, 12in., d.s., red.

Constantino, Col., A.5203, 12in., d.s., l.blue.

Carpi, Fonotopia, B.69167, 27 cm.

Garbin, Fonotopia, B.92214, 27 cm.

Krismer, Fonotopia, B.92741, 27 cm.

Polverosi, Fonotopia, B.69289, 27 cm.

Zenatello, Fonotopia, C.92204, 27 cm.

Giunto sul passo estremo della più estrema età,
Arrived at the final stage of extreme old age,

In un sogno supremo si bea l'anima già,

In a supreme dream my soul is happy now,

Si bea l'anima già, in un sogno supremo,

My soul is happy now, in a supreme dream,

Si bea l'anima già.

Re d'un placido mondo, d'una landa infinita,

Ruler of a peaceful world, of a vast pastureland,

A un popolo fecondo voglio donar la vita.

To a virile people I wish to give a livelihood.

Sotto una savia legge vo' che surgano a mille

Under a wise law I wish to see rising up

A mille e genti e gregge e case e campi e ville.

A great race of people, with flocks, houses, fields and farms.

Ah! Voglio che questo sogno sia la santa poesia

Ah! That this dream may be the sublime poem

E l'ultimo bisogno dell' esistenza mia,

And the last desire of my life,

Dell' esistenza mia. Voglio che questo... etc., as before.

Of my life.

[NOTE.—Gounod's *Faust* deals only with one episode in Goethe's poem; Boito's opera is much more comprehensive in its scope. At the conclusion of Goethe's poem, Faust is dreaming of reclaiming a vast tract of land from the sea and seeing it peopled by a peaceful and industrious agricultural community. Hence the above aria in Boito's opera.]

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SAPPHISCHE ODE

(Sapphic Ode.)

(Music by Johannes Brahms.)

Schumann-Heink, H.M.V., D.A.525, 10in., red.

Kirkby Lunn, H.M.V., D.A. 597, 10in., red.

Gerhardt, Vocalion, A.0220, 12in., d.s., pink.

Rosen brach ich Nachts mir am dunk'len Hage.
Roses I plucked at night from the darkened bush.

Süsser hauchten Duft sie, als je am Tage;
They breathed a sweeter perfume than ever by day;

Doch verstreuten reich die bewegten Aeste
But the moving branches freely scattered

Thau, der mich nässte.
The dew, which wetted me.

Auch der Küsse Duft mich wie nie berückte,
So, also, to me, the perfume of the kisses which at night
Die ich Nachts vom Strauch deiner Lippen pflückte;
I plucked from the bush of thy lips was never more enchanting;
Doch auch dir, bewegt im Gemüth gleich jenen,
But from thee, thy spirit moving like the branches,
Thauten die Thränen.
Tears came like the dew.

WIEGENLIED (Lullaby)

(Music by Johannes Brahms.)

Culp, H.M.V., D.A.151, 10in., d.s., red.

Schumann-Heink, H.M.V., D.A.525, 10in., d.s., red.

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht, mit Rosen bedacht,
Good night, good night, slip under the coverlet,

Mit Näg'lein besteckt, schlupf' unter die Deck'.
O'erspread with roses, with lilac bestrewn.

Morgen früh, wenn Gott will, wirst du wieder geweckt,
Early morning, God willing, thou shalt once more awaken.

Morgen früh, wenn Gott will, wirst du wieder geweckt.

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht, von Eng'lein bewacht,
Good night, good night, watched o'er by little angels,

Die zeigen im Traum dir Christkind-leins Baum;
Who show thee Christmas trees in thy dreams.

Schlaf' nun selig und süß, schau' im Traum's Paradies,
Sleep now blissfully and sweetly, peep into the Paradise of dreams

Schlaf' nun selig und süß, schau' im Traum's Paradies.

STILL WIE DIE NACHT

(Böhm.)

Easton, Brunswick, 15054, 10in., d.s., gold.

McCormack, H.M.V. D.A.460, 10in., d.s., red (in English).

Still wie die Nacht, tief wie das Meer
Calm as the night and deep as the sea

Soll deine Liebe sein!
Thy love must be!

Still wie die Nacht, und tief wie das Meer

Soll deine Liebe, deine Liebe sein,

Soll deine Liebe sein.

Wenn du mich liebst so wie ich dich,
If thou lov'st me as I love thee,

Will ich dein eigen sein.
I will be thine own.

Heiss wie der Stahl und fest wie der Stein
Burning as steel and steadfast as rock

Soll deine Liebe, deine Liebe sein,

Soll deine Liebe sein.

AN DIE MUSIK (To Music)

(Schubert.)

Gerhardt, Vocalion, A.0220, 12in., d.s., pink.

Du holde Kunst, in wie viel grauen Stunden,
Thou lovely art, in how many dark hours,

Wo mich des Lebens wilder Kreis umstrickt,
When life's vicious circle had ensnared me,

Hast du mein Herz zu warmer Lieb' entzündet,
Hast thou kindled my heart to warm love,

Hast mich in eine bess're Welt entrückt,
And transported me to a better world,

In eine bess're Welt entrückt!

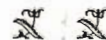
Oft hat ein Seufzer, deiner Harf' entflossen,
Often has a sigh, wafted from thy harp,

Ein süß, heiliger Akkord von dir,
A sweet and holy chord from thee,

Den Himmel bess'rer Zeiten mir erschlossen.
Revealed to me the paradise of better times.

Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir dafür,
Thou lovely art, for this I thank thee,

Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir!



WORDS WANTED BY READERS

- (1) "Dio, che nell' alma" (Don Carlos), sung by Galli-Curei and De Luca.
- (2) "Tiempo antico," sung by Caruso.
- By W. H. Palethorpe, 24, Great Russell Street, W.C. 1.
- (3) "To the Forest" (Tchaikovsky).
- (4) "Travellers all of every station" from "The Siege of Rochelle" (Balfe), sung by Peter Dawson, H.M.V., C.1169.
- By E. G. Lambie, Oaklands, 51, Balmoral Road, N.W. 2.
- (5) "The snowy-breasted Pearl" and "Come back to Erin," sung by McCormack, H.M.V., D.B.344.
- (6) "Si, mi chiamano Mimi" and "Dónde lieta uscì" from "La Bohème." In Italian.
- (7) "Addio" (Tosti) and "Musica Proibita" (Gastaldon), sung by Caruso, H.M.V., D.B.131. In Italian.
- By Miss Simmons, Sunnyside, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh.
- (8) "Les Deux Sérénades" (Leoncavallo). French.
- (9) "Santa Lucia" and "Core ingrato," D.B.142.
- (10) "O Sole Mio" and "A Vucchella," D.A.103.
- (11) "Di tu se fedele," D.A.102. In Italian and English.
- By J. H. Stephens, 34, Wentworth Road, Barnet.
- (12) "The Song of the Flea" (Moussorgsky). In English.
- (13) "Haika Troika" and "Die trane Glantze un ange" (sic), sung by Enskaja (Scala). In English.
- By A. F. Harrison, 57, Stafford Street, Longton, Staffs.
- (14) "Se la giurata fede" ("Tosca").
- (15) "Vision fugitive" ("Hérodiade").
- (16) "Giunto sul passo estremo" ("Mefistofele") (vide supra).
- (17) "Se il mio nome" ("Barbiere di Siviglia").
- (18) "Grand Isi! Grand Osiri" ("Magie Flute").
- (19) "See oppressi ognor" ("La Juive").
- (20) "Ave Signor" ("Mefistofele").
- By F. M. Griffin, 6, Claydon Street, Little Coates, Grimsby, Yorks.
- (21) "Maire my girl" and "Will you forgive?" (Arthur Jordan), Col.
- (22) "The Southdown Shepherd" (John Allwyn), Harold Williams, Col.
- (23) "The Sea Gypsy" (Michael Head), Arthur Jordan, Col.
- (24) "Here in the quiet Hills" (Carne), Hubert Eisdell, Col.
- (25) "I pitch my lonely caravan at night" (Coates), H. Eisdell, Col.
- (26) "Carry me back to old Virginny," Edna Thomas, Col.
- By J. Elliott-Smith, 7, The Broadway, Hammersmith, W. 6.

More Praise for The Cliftophone

Southampton.

DEAR SIRs,—I am writing to thank you for the many pleasant hours of relaxation I have obtained from my friend, the "Cliftophone."

If you refer to your files you will find that you supplied me with a Table Model in September.

I have nothing but praise for this machine and the records which also bear its name. I will not enter into a needless description of its virtues, but of its vices I will say—

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I am, Yours sincerely,

BERT C. BEVIS.

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A LIST OF TRANSLATIONS

Which have already been published in
THE GRAMOPHONE.

(So many of our newer readers send in titles for "Words Wanted" which have already been given in back numbers that the following may be found useful for reference.)

	VOL.	No.
Addio a Napoli, L'	I ..	12
A Granada	II ..	7
Ah fors' è lui	I ..	1
Ah! non credea mirarti	I ..	1
Ah per sempre io ti perdei	I ..	3
A la luz de la luna	II ..	6
Amor mio	I ..	12
A te, o cara	I ..	3
Ay, Ay, Ay	II ..	7
Beiden Grenadiere	I ..	2
Bel sogno beato di pace	I ..	3
Caro nome	I ..	2
Celeste Aida	I ..	1
Chanson Hindoue	I ..	8
Che farò senza Euridice	II ..	3
Che gelida manino	I ..	11
Cielo e mar	I ..	10
Clavelitos	II ..	7
Come per me sereno	II ..	5
Come rugiada al cespite	I ..	5
Come un bel dì di maggio	I ..	10
Comme autrefois	II ..	1
Dai campi, dai prati	II ..	5
Death and the Maiden (Schubert)	II ..	2
Death of Boris	I ..	6
Deh! vieni, non tardar	I ..	11
Depuis le jour	I ..	3
Der Nussbaum (Schumann)	I ..	3
Die Mainacht (Brahms)	II ..	3
Die Post (Schubert)	II ..	4
Dio Possente	II ..	2
Dite alla giovine	I ..	1
Du bist die Ruh' (Schubert)	II ..	3
Egli è salvo!	I ..	4
Élégie (Massenet)	II ..	1
Ella mi fu rapita	I ..	2
Erlkönig (Schubert)	II ..	3
Ernani! Ernani! involami	I ..	5
Farewell of Boris	I ..	6
Feldeinsamkeit	II ..	5
Haiden-Röslein	II ..	2
Hansel and Gretel— Dance Duet	II ..	3
Evening Prayer	II ..	3
I have attained the power	I ..	6
Imponete. Non amarlo, ditegli	I ..	1
Improvviso (Andrea Chénier)	I ..	10
Infelice! e tuo credevi	I ..	5
In questa tomba oscura	I ..	7
In the Town of Kazan	I ..	7
Invano, Alvaro	I ..	4
Jewel Song (Faust)	I ..	11
La donna è mobile	I ..	2
L'Altra notte in fondo al mare	II ..	5
La Mantilla	II ..	6
La Paloma	II ..	6
Largo (Handel)	I ..	7
Largo al Factotum	II ..	5
Lascia ch'io pianga	I ..	7
La vergine degli angeli	I ..	4
Le Nil	II ..	6
L'Heure Exquise	II ..	6
Lo vedremo o veglio audace	I ..	5
Madamina (Don Giovanni)	II ..	4
Madre, pietosa vergine	I ..	4
Monologue of Pimen	I ..	6
Morgen (R. Strauss)	II ..	7
Morrò! la mia memoria	I ..	1
Nina	II ..	6
Nussbaum, Der	I ..	3

	VOL.	No.
Oh de' verd' anni miei	I ..	5
Oh, tu, che in seno agl'angeli	I ..	4
Ombra leggiara	I ..	8
Ombra mai fu	I ..	7
O paradiso!	I ..	8
O vecchio Cor!	II ..	3
Pari siamo!	I ..	2
Parmi veder le lagrime	I ..	2
Perchè?	I ..	12
Piangi, piangi fanciulla	I ..	2
Pimen's Monologue	I ..	6
Prologue—Si può? (Pagliacci)	I ..	1
Pure siccome un angelo	I ..	1
Quand' ero paggio	II ..	5
Quando rapito in estasi	I ..	3
Questa o quella	I ..	2
Qui la voce sua soave	I ..	3
Regnava nella silenzio	I ..	3
Rimpianto (Toselli's Serenade)	II ..	5
Salut, demeure chaste et pure	II ..	2
Schiller's Ode to Joy	II ..	1
Sempre libera degg'io folleggiare	I ..	1
Senta's Ballad	II ..	4
Serenade Espagnole	II ..	1
Sérénade (Faust)	II ..	2
Solenne in quest'ora	I ..	4
Song of the Volga Boatmen	I ..	6
Son lo spirito che nega	II ..	4
Sovra il sen la man mi posa	II ..	6
Spirito gentil	I ..	11
Ständchen (Schubert)	II ..	3
Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht	II ..	7
Suoni la tromba, e intrepido	I ..	3
Surta è la notte	I ..	5
Te Quiero	II ..	6
To Julia	I ..	7
Two Grenadiers, The	I ..	2
Un dì all'azzurro	I ..	10
Una voce poco fa	I ..	10 and 12
Ungeduld (Schubert)	II ..	2
Vainement, ma bien-aimée	II ..	1
Veau D'Or, Le	II ..	2
Vecchia zimmara	I ..	8
Verranno a te sull'aure	I ..	5
Vien', diletto, è in cielo la luna	I ..	3
Vous qui faites l'endormie	II ..	2
Wanderers Nachtlied (Rubinstein)	II ..	7
Widmung (Schumann)	II ..	2
Wiegenlied (Mozart)	II ..	2
Wohin? (Schubert)	I ..	7



A NOTE ON REVIEWS.

At the risk of appearing tedious to our *ab ovo* readers, we must reiterate at the beginning of a new year the conditions in which the reviews are written. As a rule, records for review only arrive at the office a very few days before we go to press, and our monthly reviewers are obliged to work under the goad of the editorial taskmaster. Review copies of records are often only rough pressings, and therefore it is seldom wise to be dogmatic about the *surface* of them, at any rate in condemnation. The Editor at his leisure—though leisure is a word which those who know him will read with derision—writes his quarterly reviews, and the next one is due in the February number; but even this panoramic survey of the output of three months is becoming every time less like a pleasant, dallying, ruminative luncheon, and more like a frantic attempt to swallow and digest a city dinner in ten minutes without loss of dignity. A glance at the successive quarterly reviews of the last eighteen months will show how rapidly the *menus* have grown in length.

This month, owing to the Christmas holidays, the COLUMBIA records arrived too late for discussion; but the *C minor Symphony* of Brahms is a notable achievement with which to begin the New Year, and the whole bulletin is highly interesting.

Unbiased Opinion

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Analytical Notes and First Reviews

THE PATHETIC SYMPHONY

PARLOPHONE.—E.10207-10212 (six 12in. records in album, 3ls. 6d.).—**The Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Symphonie Pathétique, No. 6, in B minor** (Tchaikovsky). [Cf. **His Master's Voice**, D.713-707, five 12in. records, in album, 32s. 6d. **Columbia**, L.1489-1492, four 12in. records, in album, 30s.]

Tchaikovsky's sixth symphony, the *Pathétique*, was also his last. It was written in 1893, the year of his death, and faithfully reflects his psychological condition at the time. It is fashionable to paint the picture of his last years in the darkest of colours and to regard the symphony as nothing but the last hysterical outburst of an over-wrought nature that was drawing near to the border-line of insanity. History on the one hand, and the first and last movements of the work on the other, make it impossible to deny that this popular idea is in the main accurate; but one only needs to turn to the carefully-written biography in Grove's Dictionary or to the two middle movements of the symphony to realise that even for Tchaikovsky the silver lining to the cloud was visible, if only intermittently. I do not propose to embark on an analysis of the "soul-states" depicted in the various movements—that has been done far too often already—but after all that has been said by so many writers I think it is time to point out that even in the *Symphonie Pathétique*, the most melancholy work of a melancholy writer, there are moments when the gloom is dispersed. How, otherwise, could this music have obtained such an immense popularity?

The first movement opens darkly. Against a background of basses a bassoon wails out a slow theme which becomes the chief subject of the movement. Soon the pace quickens and the same phrase is treated by strings and wood-wind with all the technical mastery and command of orchestral colour for which Tchaikovsky is justly famous. The brass joins in as the climax approaches and then the music dies down again till the violas are left alone. A pause, and now violins and 'cellos in octaves announce the elegiac melody which forms the second subject. This style of writing for strings in octaves has now become the stock-in-trade of all composers of restaurant music, but when Tchaikovsky used it it was comparatively new, and there is no denying its effectiveness here. The section includes also some delicate dialogue between the members of the wood-wind family. The development opens with a thunder-clap and a feeling of hysterical strain prevails throughout. The first subject undergoes a series of strenuous adventures and the composer has not hesitated to introduce a quantity of new material. A climax is reached with the opening of the recapitulation, the first subject being heard *fortissimo* in the brass. The end of the movement is reached in an orthodox manner, a beautiful and original *coda* being provided by a series of *pizzicato* downward scales on the strings, treated as a ground-bass with a fragment of melody above it on the wind.

The grace of the familiar second movement comes as a welcome relief after the stress of the first. A gentle tune in five time with a dance-like rhythm provides the principal motive. There is a suggestion of melancholy in the middle when a rather more poignant idea (marked *flexibile*) is heard over a drone bass on bassoon, drum, and double bass. But the original atmosphere soon returns and the movement, which is lightly scored throughout, ends peacefully.

The third movement is a brilliant tour-de-force. The opening bars suggest a vivacious *scherzo* of a type that reminds one distantly of Beethoven's works in this genre. But soon we hear on the wind fragments of a more military nature which develop ultimately into a regular march. The combination of march and *scherzo* is sustained magnificently throughout, till the martial element finally prevails and leads to a vigorous peroration.

It is to the *Finale* more than to any other movement that the symphony owes its name. Here, indeed, one feels the shadows closing round and the hysterical climaxes do little to relieve the prevailing gloom. The note of despair is struck at the outset by a theme on the strings, and the second subject (also on the strings) is hardly less mournful. [This second theme consists of a short descending phrase and is heard at the beginning of the second side that the Parlophone recording devotes to the movement.] There is

hardly any development and the remaining portion of the symphony is taken up with a repetition of the two subjects, the first becoming even more agonised, while the second, transposed into the minor, brings the work to a conclusion, whose complete hopelessness is only equalled by the amazingly skilful technique by which the mood is expressed.

I have purposely refrained from noting where the various sides of the records begin and end. The task would be a troublesome one, as the symphony has been recorded by three companies, H.M.V., Columbia, and now Parlophone, each of whom have divided it up differently. The H.M.V. version comes nearest to a complete rendering, as it contains only one cut—fourteen bars being omitted towards the end of the last movement. The Parlophone edition gives this movement complete, but there is a much more serious mutilation of the third movement. The first and second movements are complete. In the Columbia records all four movements are badly hacked about, so much so, indeed, that I am rather surprised at their making any claim for "completeness." Generally speaking, I think the H.M.V. version is much the best. Not only do the individual instruments come out well in test places—the bassoon at the beginning of the symphony and early in the last movement, for instance, and the trumpet when it rises to very high notes in the slow scale passage that marks the climax of the last movement—but the general balance is exceedingly good. One gets the effect of a really full orchestra playing and very little of the "muddiness" which usually goes with it. Their achievement in the third movement is remarkable, and I may add that throughout the symphony their *tempi* seem better judged than those of the other companies, although once or twice they hurry a little, presumably so as to get everything in. The Columbia version I am not going to criticise in detail; not only do the cuts do irreparable damage, but I think the recording, as a whole, is far less clear and well-balanced than in some of their other undertakings. Their surface, of course, is in their favour. The great point about the Parlophone records is the consistent excellence of the string tone. In this department they are superior both to Columbia and H.M.V., I think. The quality of the brass and the general balance suffer by comparison with the fine H.M.V. achievement, but if this standard had not been set we should probably find little to complain of. Indeed, I have made notes of several places where their brass sounded particularly well. Generally speaking, the individual instruments come out well in places where one can test them, and incidentally the big drum in the third movement is most undoubtedly present and on the mark! Unfortunately, the beautiful *pianissimo* of strings and clarinets is occasionally inaudible owing to other instruments being too loud, and once or twice the *tempi* are excessively slow—the second movement is very lacking in life for this reason. But when all is said, this Parlophone version is a very good one and although H.M.V. may have done even better, their records are also slightly more expensive. P.P.

MOZART'S JUPITER SYMPHONY

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.942, 943, 944, 945 (12in., 26s.).—**The Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Albert Coates: **Symphony in C, No. 41 (Jupiter)**, on seven sides, and **Impresario Overture** on the eighth (Mozart).

A correspondent has reproved me for my temerity in attributing great virtues to symphonies of Mozart and Brahms in a recent review. He approves my remarks on the Mozart work, but suggests I have taken leave of my senses in allowing that there is any beauty in the Brahms. When his musical education has passed beyond the elementary stage he will discover that one does not exalt one composer at the expense of another: that one must cultivate the historical sense and understand a composer's relation to his time, the effect of environment upon him, and so forth: finally that the whole art of music is one's kingdom and not any one state in it. My correspondent may be surprised to learn that there are people who regard Mozart's music as fussy and superficial. Here, in addition to a lack of perception, is also a lack of the historical sense. Mozart was no revolutionary; he adopted many of the conventions of his time, as a study, for instance, of his piano sonatas will prove. Even in his greatest works passages sometimes

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occur which are merely eighteenth century platitudes; but it would be ridiculous to decry his music on that account. Appreciation, as has often been said, is criticism; criticism is not fault-finding, but an estimate based on a knowledge of all the facts.

A long preamble to Mozart's so-called *Jupiter Symphony in C major*—the last of the "big three"! It is a graceful tribute to Mozart that the premier companies have contributed each one apiece. Let us recall the substance of what Jahn says of these three masterpieces: "The first is a triumph of beauty in sound, the second a work of art exhausting its topic, and the third is in more than one respect the greatest and noblest of the symphonies."

The work we are considering is of an epic character compared to the others; there is an Olympian stride in the very first bars, followed by a quietly tender passage. Here is a formula—forte-piano—which marks music of this century, but Mozart infuses rich life into the convention; on the other hand, the quickly reached dominant cadence seems as platitudinous as Handel's descending scales; but wait awhile. After the pause it is a delight to follow Mozart's treatment of his theme and recognise with joy the delicate wood-wind elaborations he contrives. The second tune gives an opportunity for the bassoon to join in with the first violins. A sudden outburst on a chord of C minor, after a silent bar, is unexpected and doubtless agitated the conservatives of the period. The music derives from the opening bars and the stress is maintained up to the double bar, after which a repeat is made. When this is passed Mozart gently lifts us out of the key of G into that of E flat, extending the ideas recently heard through some enchanting modulations and wood-wind colours. The striding figure of the opening bars dominates the music, firmly leading it back to the recapitulation. This time the oboe joins the bassoon and first violins in the delineation of the second tune. The tonic and dominant end justifies what appeared to be padding at the start, but is now heard to fit perfectly into the scheme. The slow movement is dramatic rather than lyrical as the first bars suggest. In the *Sturm und Drang* of the music following the flute is lost on the record, and elsewhere the same fault occurs; could this not be remedied? What Gounod called the "divine lyricism of Mozart" appears in the second tune; it is in thirds on strings, bassoon, and oboe. A delicious string repartee pops up presently and is then imitated by the flute—audible this time. The horns are touched in with unerring instinct just before the repeat. The weakness of the flute is apparent in the development section, where, being occasionally overpowered by the oboe, the outline of the melody is changed. This section has a lot of rapid string passages very well recorded, even when the cellos and double basses are playing; the bassoons come out splendidly also.

The Minuet is well known in arrangements, but perhaps one may draw attention to the bigness of conception maintained here, as in the other movements of the symphony, the exquisite shifting harmonies at the end of the Minuet, the cunning of the trio with its oft-repeated "Amen" cadence. It was a daring stroke to begin a section with a full close.

The finale, *allegro molto*, is tremendous. Having regard to the small orchestra at Mozart's disposal, it is amazing what a volume of sound he must have contrived for his musical thoughts, expressed on the largest scale. The significance of the label "Jupiter" is best perceived here. The movement ends with a great fugue into which are woven all the little fragments of tunes heard before. Notice especially the one at the start, and the assertive scale-arpeggio one a little later. After a pause the composer begins to treat his first idea semi-fugally, beginning with the second violins. Unfortunately the cellos and double basses entries are inaudible on the record. Other little bits of tunes bob up including a jolly extension of the second idea—a flute and bassoon duet over rapid string passages. The whole section is repeated after this. The two chief melodies are worked in opposition, preparing the way for the fugued finale. This, a quintuple fugue, occupies the last pages of the score and is a regular whirl of sound, an extraordinary contrapuntal feat in which, gradually, the great *Jupiter* theme—the scale-arpeggio one—assumes dominance, drives all the rest from the field, and so, ends Mozart's farewell to the symphony. It is a magnificent gesture and we may, listening to it, recall the composer's words in a letter to his father: "As death, strictly speaking, is the true end and aim of our lives, I have for the last two years made myself well acquainted with this true, best friend of mankind, that his image no longer terrifies, but calms and consoles me . . . I never lie down to rest without thinking that, young as I am, before the dawn of another day I may be no more; and yet nobody who knows me would call me morose or discontented. For this blessing I thank my Creator every day and wish from my heart that I could share it with all my fellow-men." Noble,

prophetic words. A man who could write thus was already great in spirit had he never created a note of music. But the spiritual heights revealed in this letter, allied to such exquisite musical genius, gives us the full stature of him whom the French composer truly called divine.

The last side is taken up with the sparkling little overture to the *Impresario*. This one-act opera was written between the *Seraglio* and the *Marriage of Figaro*. It is an enchanting *jeu d'esprit*.

The recording is very good with the exceptions alluded to above. Mr. Coates, as might be expected, stresses the epic quality of the music; this sometimes gives an impression of roughness, but altogether it is a fine, vital interpretation.

N. P.

THE SCHUMANN PIANO CONCERTO

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.B. 722, 723, 724, 725 (12in., 34s.).—Alfred Cortot (pianoforte) and the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: *Piano Concerto in A minor*, Op. 54 (Schumann).

This issue has been eagerly awaited for a long while by many music lovers, to whom the addition of Schumann's one piano concerto to the recorded repertoire will be very welcome. Unfortunately the recording itself is not so good as we might have hoped for. The oboe offends by its meagre tone more than once, and the bass is often far from strong enough. The general effect is sufficiently good, but more attention should have been paid to matters of detail; in these this company does not usually err. Opinions will vary about Cortot's interpretation. It is that of a member of one of the most hard-headed, unromantic nations in the world—diametrically opposed, therefore, to Schumann's peculiar genius. Many would have preferred the soloist to be someone steeped in the Schumann tradition (for instance, Mme. Fanny Davies), but though I am at variance with Cortot's idea of the first movement, I like immensely his treatment of the *Intermezzo*, which is tender and whimsical, and of the *Finale*, which is as brilliant as you could wish for.

Schumann had intended his first movement to be an independent work with the title "Fantasia"; the others were added two years later. The form is, as opposed to the classical one, free. After a series of brilliant descending chords from the soloist, the wood-wind and horns announce the beautiful tune round which the interest of the movement centres. It is then played by the soloist. The oboe, whose part stands out most prominently at this point, plays the first important note so faintly that, to anyone not knowing the tune, it is entirely lost, thus changing the character of Schumann's conception; this fault should have been put right. Cortot's rendering seems to me to lack the passion called for by the nature of the music. A second theme follows immediately on the G string of the violins, supported by the piano: the latter instrument developing it into two more short melodic ideas and a sudden burst into the original tune, momentarily in the major. Schumann now subjects this to varying treatment. The time quickens and the clarinet plays it over a rippling piano accompaniment; the interest is then transferred to the solo instrument. A climax comes about with one of the tags of the second tune. The key is changing, the speed slowing down as this side ends.

Second Record.

The principal tune undergoes a new metamorphosis into the key of A flat, the marking being *Andante espressivo*. In this section we get a good idea of the innate poetry of Schumann's nature and the intimate relationship he achieved between piano and orchestra. Their conversation is of lovely things. The clarinet is well recorded, but the bass is too weak. The period of tranquillity over, the piano starts its leaping octaves again, with the orchestra joining in. This serves as a link to the next section, marked *piu animato*, a passionate version of the main tune. A *ritardando*, in progress as this side ends, leads to the third record.

The recapitulation.—This time the oboe is sufficiently prominent. All happens as before except for changes in the orchestration until a piano arpeggio brings us to the—

Fourth Record.

Cadenza.—This is no mere display of virtuosity but an integral part of the movement. A trill announces its conclusion and the beginning of the *coda*—a very quick version of the central idea.

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repartee; the former, however, more than holding its own. What would be the "trio" is a rich tune on the 'cellos with a running commentary from the soloist. Clarinet and bassoon succeed the 'cellos, then violas and 'cellos. The link between this and the final movement is exquisitely forged in the spirit of true romanticism, with, also, a truly artistic unity of conception.

Sixth Record.—The last movement is more or less in *rondo* form. It is brilliantly laid out in a way which recalls the Chopin *Rondos*. But the episode is distinctively Schumannesque (*seventh record*) with its delightful syncopated rhythm. Cortot is at his best here, the rapid passage work being admirably suited to his wonderful technique. With a little more care these records would have been a big success; as it is, welcome as they are, they just fall short of it.

N. P.

BACH SONATA

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.939, 940 (12in., 13s.).—William Primrose (violin): *Sonata in A, No. 2* (Bach). Piano accompaniment.

The Maud Powell record of movements from two of Bach's violin and piano sonatas is by no means satisfactory, having been made a long while ago, so it is good indeed to have a complete sonata—*No. II in A major*—played by William Primrose and H. Y. Templeman. Bach's six violin and piano sonatas contain music, wholly delightful throughout, in the composer's most intimate, hearthside manner. The opening movement of this work (*Andante*) consists of a highly figurate melody announced by the violin and answered by the piano both in treble and bass. Just before the end an unexpected modulation lends a touch of awe to the music. His serious preluding done, Bach dashes off into an *Allegro assai*, in which pianist and violinist are kept busy all through. The tune is given out by the latter who is again answered by the pianist in semi-fugal style; a usual method in Bach's music. A most exhilarating movement this. Now comes a movement, *Andante un poco*, in canon form. Note by note the piano repeats what the violin says, even until the end. While this is proceeding the violin goes on with the next sentence, as it were. Two people talking together thus would produce an unpleasant noise, but two strands of melody combined, intensify one the beauty of the other. Bach ends with a question mark resolved in the *presto* of the last movement. I can picture one of the numerous Bach progeny playing this to his father's nimble harpsichord accompaniment; Anna Magdalena, with the others, beating out the rhythm. The performance is notable for fine playing and balance on the part of both artists; excellent recording too.

N. P.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

- D.B.798 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Galli-Curci (soprano): *Pretty Mocking Bird* (Bishop) and *Slumber Song* from *Dinorah* (Meyerbeer).
 D.A.636 (10in., 6s.).—McCormack (tenor), with violin obbligato by Kreisler: *I saw from the beach* (old Irish air, arr. H. Hughes) and *Padraic the Fiddler* (J. F. Larchet).
 D.A.559 (10in., 6s.).—Dinh Gilly (baritone): *Vecchia Zimarra* from *La Bohème* and *Scorri fiume* from *Il Tabarro* (Puccini).
 E.364 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Ben Davies (tenor): *When Laura smiles and Go to bed, sweet Muse* from *Elizabethan Love Songs* (arr. F. Keel).
 E.365 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Edna Thornton (contralto): *Over the Mountains* (arr. Quilter) and *When singing birds are mute* (Hamblen).
 E.366 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Elsie Suddaby (soprano): *The Virgin's Lullaby* from *Bethlehem* (Boughton) and *Shepherd, thy demeanour vary* (Brown, arr. Lane Wilson).
 D.941 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—De Reske Singers (male quartet): *Studies in Imitation* (arr. H. Hughes). "Little Tommy Tucker," "Little Jack Horner," and "There was a crooked man."
 E.1176 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Marche Militaire* (Gounod, arr. Evans) and *Caliph of Bagdad Overture* (Boieldieu).
 B. 1910 (10in., 3s.).—De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra. *Precious wee one*, lullaby, and *Come when the world is sleeping*.
 B.1911 (10in., 3s.).—Una Bourne (pianoforte): *Finnish Rhythms* (1) *Karelian Dance*, (2) *Minuet*, (3) *Minuet-Waltz* (Palmgren), and *November* from *The Months*, Op. 37a, No. 11 (Tchaikovsky).

B.1912 (10in., 3s.).—Sydney Coltham (tenor): *Devotion* (Wood) and *What a wonderful world* (Löhr).

B.1913 (10in., 3s.).—Walter Glynn (tenor): *Rosebud* (Drummond) and *Oh let no star compare with thee* (Head).

B.1914 (10in., 3s.).—Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): *The Tramp* (Sawyer) and *Cider* (Mulliner).

E.1177 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Alfred Lester: *Fowls* and *Insuring his life* (Fred Rome).

The chief character in Meyerbeer's *Dinorah* is a goat which accompanies the mad prima donna on her wanderings. In the last act she falls off a bridge and, coming into contact with the swirling waters below, emerges dry—and sane! I only possess a rudimentary knowledge of Italian, but I gather that "Bella! capretta adorata" means "Beautiful! adored goat!" This is the recitative. The aria that follows—the goat's slumber song—is more original than most of Meyerbeer's cooked-up music. A phrase for the orchestra at the end, like that phrase in *O Paradiso*, glimpses what the composer, with courage and less comfortable circumstances, might have achieved. Galli-Curci's singing is too loud for a slumber song and, for her, rather hard; but she gets several very pleasing effects. *Pretty Mocking Bird* enables her to do some excellent lip-work; it was a very popular item at her recent concerts, but, musically, it is a good deal below Bishop's usual standard.

The McCormack record is very beautiful from every point of view. The words are clear, the interpretation sensitive, and Kreisler's obbligatos are exquisitely woven into the singing. I do not know who J. F. Larchet is, but it is high praise to say that his song can well bear comparison with Herbert Hughes's setting of the Irish air. Padraic seems to be an old mystical fiddler such as one would not be at all surprised to meet with in the Emerald Isle. There is that in these two songs which tugs at one's heart-strings. Gilly's record has a melancholy, as well as other, interest. Only a few days ago Puccini, whose music, as *The Times* said, has given pleasure to hundreds of thousands and, whatever its degree of merit, always *was* music, passed out of our midst. His last three little operas showed no failing powers, but the same flow of melody, the same sure dramatic grip, the same cleverly devised orchestration. Added to this there was in *Gianni Schicchi* a vein of sardonic humour unsuspected in the composer. *Scorri fiume*, sung in the opera by the jealous Michele—the plot is the usual three-cornered tragedy—is a fine piece of dramatic writing with an original harmonic touch. Both this and Colline's well-known farewell to his coat are splendidly sung and recorded. The songs that follow are on a distinctly higher level than for some long time past. If only the individual qualities of each of these vocalists could be combined in one singer, what a fine artistic hermaphrodite that would be! As it is, there is much to admire in Ben Davies's singing of two arrangements—offensive to the purist but quite delightful to the man in the street—of old English lute songs; his delivery is, however, too jerky. Edna Thornton produces consistently lovely tone and makes much of Quilter's charming arrangement of an old English tune and one of the most musical ballads I have listened to for a long while; but her diction is still that of a contralto. Elsie Suddaby sustains the big reputation her first record gained her with her interpretation of the exquisite cradle song from Boughton's *Bethlehem*—one of the best things he has done. Her singing of what sounds like faked "old English" is rather breathless, but clean and efficient. These three records will all give great pleasure. The De Reske singers complete Hughes' *Studies in Imitation*. It would be interesting to know who is able to detect what composer is being "guyed." Is "Tommy Tucker" Tchaikovsky? These singers are as fresh and virile as ever. De Groot is in a class by himself; really he is uncriticisable! You may be "highbrow" about his playing and his selection of music over here, but when you are thousands of miles from London, nothing will recapture the atmosphere of Piccadilly and theatreland so much as a De Groot record. Una Bourne has produced a nice little record of some miniatures by Palmgren, a grateful writer for the piano, and Tchaikovsky's *Troika-en-traineaux*. She drives the sleigh with much less gusto than Chaliapine, but very pleasantly. Good piano tone. I cannot find anything to say about Coltham's record; it is along well-worn path. *Rosebud* is a suburban blossom, but *Oh, let no star compare with thee*, quite unexpectedly, turns out to be a really delightful song. Walter Glynn gives it the full benefit of a voice of lovely quality. Peter Dawson sings two typical effusions. He thanks God in ringing tones for the apples that provide that most delicious of drinks, cider! Altogether an unusually interesting list.

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HAYDN'S OXFORD SYMPHONY

VOCALION.—K.05125, 05126, 05127 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—**The Aeolian Orchestra**, conducted by H. Greenbaum: **Symphony No. 16 in G major** ("Oxford") (Haydn).

Now that the three big Mozart symphonies are issued it is indeed time that attention was paid to the father of the symphony, Haydn. If I am not mistaken, the Vocalion Company were the first to bring out one of the Mozart works; now they are again earning our gratitude and respect with the appearance of these records. The symphony takes its name from Oxford because it was performed when the composer visited that town to have the honorary degree of Doctor of Music conferred upon him. Grove says that Haydn took a new symphony with him, but there was no time for proper rehearsal, so this one was substituted. It has not the immediately attractive qualities of, for instance, No. 2 (London No. 7), but it is full of invention and delicious touches of orchestral colour.

FIRST RECORD.

Adagio.—The beautifully proportioned string opening is characteristic of Haydn's art; every note tells, every one is clearly heard. Notice the way, a little later, in which the repeated notes are carried up through first violins into oboe and flute. That sighing phrase for the first violin at the close of this section, how it holds us in suspense!

Allegro Spiritoso.—And the unexpected occurs; at least it must have seemed so to Haydn's audience. The tune is not a very striking one, and is of unusual length for a first subject. Instead of the second theme following, this first one is repeated in more elaborate form. The second, when it does appear on the strings, is quite short. With the opening of the next side the composer begins to expand his second idea through modulation as well as figuration. We get some delightful oboe and bassoon passages. The development section, which is not long, makes play with both ideas; then, after a rest of two beats following on a strenuous *ff*—a very Haydnesque proceeding—back trips the first tune. The rest is pure, familiar, delight.

SECOND RECORD.

Adagio.—The principal theme is offered to us four times, each repetition being presented in different dress. Thus the strings begin, the flute continues, the oboe follows, and the violins complete, the exposition of the tune. The writing for flute and oboe is most interesting. No wonder Haydn was accused of being an apostle of the new music! The middle section uses the full orchestra up to the point where some delicate writing for bassoon, oboe, and flute intervenes; then the emphatic first tune reinstates itself on violins and oboes. The composer's treatment here repays close attention for its own sake and for the effect it was to have on youthful Beethoven. The wood-wind fugal coda is very lovely.

THIRD RECORD.

Minuet and Trio.—The minuet is in Haydn's jolliest vein and calls for no particular comment, but the Trio has the original feature of a tune on bassoons and horns contrasted with the strings. The abrupt way these instruments stop is very amusing; intentionally we may be sure. Now that people are talking of syncopation as if it were the exclusive invention of America it might be well to draw attention to the syncopated effects Haydn devises here; sforzandos on the weak accents of the bar; not that the principle was at all new in his day.

Presto.—A movement in rondo form founded on a very happy little tune. The music travels on some way with uninterrupted gaiety and then come a whole string of what are labelled "G.P." in the score; that is long pauses, having the effect of a general paralysis of the orchestra! On goes the music again until Haydn, as if to check unseemly conversation in his audience or, at any rate, to catch them out in some way, suddenly halts the band again. Several times the music seems about to fade away altogether, like a dimmed electric light, but a moment later it flashes out again. The coda has a version of the main tune on flute and violin—an octave apart—which is adorable. The conductor does not quite get the elasticity one would like from his forces and there are some ragged ends. On the whole, however, the performance is a good one. The recording is excellent, especially in the wood-wind department.

N.P.

BRUNSWICK

50049 (12in., 8s.).—**Bronislaw Huberman** (violin): **Concerto in E minor, Andante and Finale** (Mendelssohn).

15072 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Giacomo Lauri-Volpi** (tenor): **Serenata** (Mascagni) and **Luna d'Estate** (Mazzola-Tosti).

5196 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Vessella's Italian Band**: **Selection from Il Trovatore** (Verdi).

This is not a very exciting list. Huberman plays two movements of the Mendelssohn *Concerto* with rather a hard brilliance. The *Finale* can bear this, but not the *Andante*. Mr. Huberman does well not to sentimentalise it, but he goes too much in the opposite direction. This concerto does not differ from others in sounding unsatisfactory with a piano, instead of an orchestral, accompaniment. The recording is good. Lauri-Volpi sings his two canzonas with a truly Neapolitan fervour. A pleasing record for our cold, fog-ridden climate.

N. P.

BEST DANCE RECORDS.

I gather that we shall not see that excellent slow fox-trot, *Tea for two*, on records for the present; but the most popular tune that we can get at present is *All alone with you*, which is also called *In a little rendez-vous*, one of Ted Snyder's happiest inventions. The following records are pretty sure to give satisfaction; all fox-trots unless otherwise indicated. I have marked with an asterisk those that struck me as especially worthy of mention:—

ACO (2s. 6d.).

G.15563.—**Hard-hearted Hannah* and *Dream Daddy*.

G.15564.—*She loves me* and *Cannibola (I love you)*, one-step.

G.15566.—*June Night* and *Susquehanna Home*.

COLUMBIA (3s.).

3518.—**After the storm* and **Dream Daddy*.

3532.—**All alone* and *Moonlight Memories*.

PARLOPHONE (2s. 6d.).

E.5290.—**California (here I come)* and *Virginia (don't go too far)*.

E.5291.—**Lonely little melody* and **All alone with you*.

E.5292.—**Come back to me* (waltz) and *Bing Bing*.

E.5293.—**Any way the wind blows* and *She loves me*.

VOCALION (3s.).

X.9488.—*Please* and *It looks like rain*.

X.9500.—*Golden Melody* and *Eccentric*.

X.9501.—*No one knows what it's all about* and *The Golden West* (waltz).

These three are played by the London Band, and are all rather showy and intricate, without being likely to please everyone.

X.9489.—**Any way the wind blows* and *That's Georgia*.

X.9491.—**Dreamy Delaware* (waltz) and *Somebody loves me*.

X.9498.—*Sweet little you* and *Tessie*.

X.9499.—*Follow the Swallow* and **All alone with you*.

IMPERIAL (2s.).

1357.—*California* and *From One till Two*.

1358.—*Ogo-pogo* and *Why does a chicken cross the road?*

ZONOPHONE (2s. 6d.).

2514.—**Love is just a gamble* and *Out of a million*.

2515.—**The Golden West* (waltz) and *Dreary Weather*.

BRUNSWICK (3s.).

2614.—**It had to be you* and **After the storm*.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE (3s.).

B.1916.—**Chaliapinata* and *Just like a beautiful story*.

B.1917.—**Driftwood* and *Dream Daddy*.

B.1920.—**Nobody's Sweetheart* and **Charley, my boy*.

B.1921.—**Where the dreamy Wabash flows* and *By the waters of Minnetonka*.

B.1925.—**Sahara* and *I wonder what's become of Sally*, waltz.

B.1924.—**Dreamy Delaware* and *June brought the roses*, waltzes.

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- 1359 Go 'Long, Mule (Creamer and King). Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Banjo Accomp.
Half a Moon (Reynolds and Hanley). Song.
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Banjo Accomp.
1355 California (Here I Come) (Jolson, Sylva and Meyer).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Piano and Banjo Accomp.
Dream Daddy (Herscher and Keefer). Favourite Radio Song.
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
Honolulu (Nat. Goldstein).
1354 Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
From One till Two (Bard and Hoover).
Sung by Ray Lennard, with Orchestral Accomp.
Oh! Sarah! Won't You Please Pull Down that Blind? (C. Gaskill). Comedy Song.
1353 Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
Why does a Chicken Cross the Road? (Paul Andrew). Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Gerry, with Orchestral Accomp.
1352 I Wonder what's become of Sally? (Milton Ager). Ballad.
Sung by Chas. Bonheur and Joe Price, with Orchestral Accomp.
Why did you Call Me "Wonderful One"? (Vincent and Herbert).
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
1351 It's a Man every time, It's a Man (Dublin, McHugh and Dash).
Sung by Joe Price, with Orchestral Accomp.
In between the Showers (L. Silberman).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
1350 Songs of the Past. By the Imperial Male Quartette.
Southern Medley. By the Imperial Male Quartette.

Christmas Carols and Hymns.

- 1362 Adeste Fideles. Christmas Hymn.
Sung by the Vesper Trio.
The Bell Ringer (Whitlock). Bells.
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1361 Eternal Father. Hymn.
Sung by the Vesper Trio.
Onward, Christian Soldiers (Sullivan). Hymn.
Sung by the Vesper Trio.
1360 Christians Awake! (Christmas Hymn).
Sung by the Vesper Trio.
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross. Hymn.
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- GREAT SCOOP FOR IMPERIALS. First Issue. Three Selections. Played by the Newcastle Steel Works Band (Australia's Premier Band) Conductor, Mr. A. H. Baile. Officially placed Third in National Brass Band Festival (1924) at the Crystal Palace. First in Belle Vue Contest (1924) Manchester. First in Halifax Contest (1924).
1349 Morris Dance, No. 1 (Three dances from "Henry VIII.") (German).
Shepherd's Dance, No. 2 (Three dances from "Henry VIII.") (German).
1348 Played by the Newcastle Steel Works Band (Australia's Premier Band) (Conductor, Mr. A. H. Baile).
Three Dances from "Henry VIII." (Torch Dance, No. 3) (German).
1347 Played by the Newcastle Steel Works Band (Australia's Premier Band) (Conductor, Mr. A. H. Baile).
The Wee Grenadier (Theodore Graham).
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Hawaiian Guitars

- 1356 Marcheta. Hawaiian Guitars. Played by Ferera's Serenaders.
Forget-me-Not (Mai Poina-Oe). Hawaiian Guitars.
1347 Ben Bolt (N. Kneass and English). Hawaiian Quartette.
Silver Threads among the Gold (Rexford and Danks). Hawaiian Quartette.
By Ferera's Hawaiian Serenaders.

Dances

- 1358 Ogo-Pogo (Mark Strong). Fox Trot.
Why does a Chicken Cross the Road? (Paul Andrew). Fox Trot.
1357 Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
California (Here I Come). (Jolson, Sylva and Meyer). Fox Trot.
From One till Two (Bard and Hoover). Fox Trot.
1346 Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Welsh Medley (Henry Geehl). One Step.
Irish Medley (Henry Geehl). One Step.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.

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THE NEW-POOR PAGE

Half-Crown and Two-Shilling
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THE flood of essentially Christmas records issued last month too late for review in the December magazine and useless to our readers in January, leaves me with some space to spare which may well be utilised by adding a few of the best of the cheap records of the year to the others.

In serious music the great improvement (substantially a new invention I should think) in PIANOFORTE recording made by the Homochord people makes it necessary for me, in your interest, to give a list of some of the half-crown records I have bought: *Pensées Fugitives*, *Impromptu A flat*, *Waltz Arabesque*, *Apache Dance*. In the essentially English style of piano recording, now greatly improved, I will mention *Liebesträume* (Aco.), *Gipsy Dance* (Beltona), *Bees' Wedding* (Winner), *May Moon* (Zono.).

SOPRANO. A half-crown number by Thea Phillips on the new Aco. list is notable. This lady really is a soprano and the Aco. recording suits her well, so she should be followed in the future—*London Spring Song*. Regals—*Il Bacio*, *Love is meant to make us glad*.

CONTRALTO.—*Before you came*, Edith Furmudge (Aco.), *My dear soul*, Minnie Mearns (Beltona), *By the fountain*, Joan Murray (Regal).

TENOR.—*Ninetta*, Sidney Coltham (Zono.), *La Donna è Mobile*, Hughes Macklin (Beltona), *Once again*, Eric Randolph (Regal), *On with the motley*, Tudor Davies (Scala).

BARITONE.—*The gay highway*, John Thorne (Winner), *Land of long ago*, Thorpe Bates (Regal), *Four Indian love lyrics* (two discs), Kenneth Walters (Regal), *The gentle maiden* (Regal), *Hills of Donegal* (Beltona), *Noël Païen* (Imperial). The last should be first.

VIOLIN.—*Caprice Viennois* (Beltona), *Swing Song* (Imperial), *The song of the Volga boatmen* and *Czardas* (Parlo.), *Meditation from Thaïs* (Aco.).

CELLO.—*Caro mio ben*, *Abendstanchen*, *Romance* (Parlo.), *La Fileuse* (Beltona).

TRIOS.—*Cavatina (Raff)* (Parlo.).

QUARTETTES (STRING).—*La Fringante*, *Menuetto*, *Sweet and low* (Beltona). **QUARTETTES (VOCAL).**—*O Salutaris* (Beltona).

SMALL ORCHESTRAS.—*By the riverside*, *Bohemian*, *Serenade*, Edith Lorand (Parlo.), *La Cinquantaine*, Sutherland (Beltona).

* * *

There being so many New Year entertainments for young people, perhaps I may be forgiven for mentioning a few records suitable for the purpose. On the Winner list there is a speech to boy scouts by Sir Baden Powell that all boys will like to hear. There is some megaphone effect in it, but this serves a useful purpose in enabling one to picture the Chief Scout addressing a huge Jamboree. Really perfect spoken records are the fairy tales told by Eric Foster on Aco. His vocalisation is clear to a degree and so suave and so musical withal, that it never wakes up the least megaphone effect—*Thumbalina*. Popular songs sung beautifully by Billy Desmond are *One fine day*, *Dreary weather* (Aco.). Wireless Willie gives some *Alleged humour at the piano* (Beltona). There is some megaphone effect here and it gives the effect usually obtained from a loud-speaker. Well recorded comic songs that made me laugh are *When one has one little one one wants one little one more* (Aco.) and *Turned up* (Beltona). Vocal fox-trots—*Go 'long mule* (Beltona) and *California* (Winner). About this last song, sung by Mr. Fred Granger, let me say I heard in absolute truth every vowel and every consonant and he sings so suavely that he never wakes the least megaphone effect.

I hate Hawaiian records as a rule, but there is one I can bear, it is *Song of the Volga boatmen* (Winner). The plaintive nature of the music suits the wailing of the instruments.

A record of real beauty, useful as a guessing competition as to the instrument used in performing it is *Kiss in the dark*, Hand Saw (Beltona).

DANCE MUSIC.—Waltz, *Dreamy Melody*, Edith Lorand (Parlo.). Fox-trots—*Arabiana*, note the glorious bass tone; *What'll I do*, note the extraordinary piccolo-cornet work; *June night*, *Adoring you*—all played by Vincent Lopez (Parlo.). *Sweet Butter* (Actuelle).

* * *

By the way, I am glad to hear that the winner of the December Competition chose one of my special recommendations for part of his prize—the *Toreador's Song* from *Carmen* and the *Prayer* from *William Tell* sung by the Baritone of the Monte Carlo Opera House for IMPERIAL. I expect he has the other record (see my note last month) already.

* * *

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H.T.B.

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BY

Capt. H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

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(Analytical Notes continued from page 301)

PARLOPHONE

(12 in., d.s., 4s. 6d. each).

- E.10222 to 10226 (five records, 22s. 6d.).—**The Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Ed. Moerike: **Beethoven's Seventh Symphony in A major, Op. 92.**
- E.10219.—**Emmy Heckman-Bettendorf** (soprano): **Elizabeth's Prayer from Tannhäuser** (Wagner).
- E.10215.—**The Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Ed. Moerike: **Tannhäuser's Pilgrimage to Rome** (Wagner).
- E.10218.—**Grete Eweler Quartet**: **String Quartet in F major, Op. 96 (Lento)** (Dvorák).
- E.10216.—**M. Michailow** (violin): **Musetta's Aria from La Bohème** (Puccini) and **Souvenir** (Drdla).
- E.10217.—**Edith Lorand** (violin): **Meditation on a Praeludium by J. S. Bach** (O. H. Lange) and **Ave Maria** (Arcadelf).
- E.10213.—**Marek Weber and his famous Orchestra**: **Vienna Woods and The Treasure**, waltzes (J. Strauss).
- E.10214.—**Marek Weber and his famous Orchestra**: **Marcheta and What'll I do**, waltzes.
- E.10220.—**John Perry** (tenor): **Lend me your aid from The Queen of Sheba** (Gounod).
- E.10221.—**De Franceschi** (baritone): **O monumento from La Gioconda** (Ponchielli) and **Lei vindicata assai from Dinorah** (Meyerbeer).

Tannhäuser, like *Aida*, is a well-nigh perfect opera. It contains many of those elements—a dramatic, easily followed, story; a hint of supernatural powers, a chorus of monks, pageantry, love faithful unto death, and so on—which brewed skilfully make for popular success. *Rienzi*, however, though concocted from similar material has not held the stage. Wagner probably wrote the latter with his tongue in his cheek, but he believed wholeheartedly in *Tannhäuser*. There are passages in it which he never surpassed in later years. One of these is that exquisite scene where, having prayed to Our Lady at a little wayside shrine, Elizabeth passes out of sight up a mountain pathway, watched by Wolfram below. No word is spoken between them, but the music tells, more eloquently than words, of his undeclared love for the broken-hearted woman. Mme. Bettendorf would evidently be an ideal Elizabeth; she manages to get into her voice the note of purity characteristic of Wagner's heroine. The second aria has never been recorded before to my knowledge. It was well worth doing and blends excellently with the previous one. Elizabeth throws herself at the feet of the knights, who are outraged at Tannhäuser's erotic outburst at the competition in the Hall of Song and are about to kill him. She beseeches them to spare his life, pleading that he has temporarily lost his reason. The Landgrave, her uncle, insists, however, on his banishment; at that moment a band of pilgrims are heard singing on their way to Rome. Tannhäuser joins them. Here again Mme. Bettendorf's interpretation is both convincing and artistic.

The orchestral record is the prelude to Act III: Tannhäuser's Pilgrimage to Rome. The music depicts the anguished struggle proceeding in his soul. He can still hear and feel the allure of the sensual call of Venusberg; but the theme of repentance sung by horns, then brass and, finally, strings, tells us what depths of remorse have claimed him. The recording is splendid, the brass coming out remarkably well.

I think all previous records of the so-called "Nigger Quartet" have been cut; here, at any rate, we have it in complete form. Dunhill, in his book on Chamber Music, says that no actual negro tunes are used in it or in the New World Symphony. Dvorak filtered his music through them as it were. The playing of this movement is not so good as that of the Flonzaley Quartet; which is to say it is not perfect. The 'cello lacks richness, but, all the same, the record is a good one. Michailow indulges in two old favourites. I suppose Musetta's aria is Puccini's best-known tune; it found its way into Finck's "Melodious Memories"—an acid test. I am not sure that Musetta is not really a tragic little figure; the music suggests it here. It would be interesting to have the part so played; it rarely receives a satisfactory interpretation of any kind.

Drdla's piece (the bulletin obligingly gives us a phonetic transcription "Durdla") is one of the most pleasant things of its kind I know. Playing and recording good. This applies also to Edith

Lorand's record. She has left the beaten track indeed. I cannot discover what prelude of Bach O. H. Lange meditates upon, but he does it quite nicely. Gounod's work will have to look to its laurels. When I put on a Marek Weber record I relapse into a big arm-chair with a sigh and abandon myself to dreams of what once was, the irretrievably lost. In a word, I sentimentalise gorgeously; do you, dear reader, not do the same? If so you will thoroughly enjoy *What'll I do* and the rest. John Perry deals effectively with a not over interesting aria from Gounod's *Queen of Sheba* (anglice "Irene"). After hearing Franceschi sing *O Monumento* I am inclined to agree with Mr. Klein that Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* is a neglected opera. Barnaba, an Inquisition spy, tells in the aria of his love for the much persecuted heroine. *Dinorah* is receiving a lot of attention from opera singers just now. This is Noel the goatherd's aria, sung over the apparently lifeless corpse of Dinorah. He had deserted her to seek for hidden treasure, and she, never very strong in the head, had, in a fit of wandering, fallen off a broken bridge just as Noel providentially returns. So all ends happily.

THE SEVENTH SYMPHONY.

There is only opportunity to notify the appearance of a very excellent recording of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*. Those who could not afford the Columbia issue will be able to purchase the complete work in this form for a little over a pound. It is a wonderfully cheap investment.

VOCALION.

- B.3114 (10in., 4s.).—**Rosing** (tenor): **The Clock** (Saehnovsky) and **The Journey** (Glinka). In Russian.
- A.0222 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Lazzari** (bass): **La Calunnia** from *Il Barbiere* (Rossini) and **Il lacerato spirito** from *Simon Boccanegra* (Verdi). In Italian.
- A.0221 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Rosa Raisa** (soprano): **L'Altra notte from Mefistofele** (Boito) and, with **Giacomo Rimini** (baritone), **Mira, d'acerbe lagrime** from *Il Trovatore* (Verdi).
- X.9492 (10in., 3s.).—**Morlais Morgan** (baritone): **Bonnie George Campbell** (Keel) and **The Jolly Tinker** (arr. E. Newton).
- K.05122 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Olga Haley** (mezzo-soprano): **The Harvest of Sorrow** (Rachmaninoff) and **Auf dem Wasser zu singen** (Schubert).
- K.05123 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Malcolm McEachern** (bass): **The Great Adventure** (Fletcher) and **The Skipper of the Mary Jane** (Richards).
- X.9493 (10in., 3s.).—**Destournel** (soprano): **Cherry Ripe** (Horn, arr. Liza Lehmann) and **The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington** (arr. Clutsam).
- X.9485 (10in., 3s.).—**Gladys Moncrieff** (soprano): **One lone star** (McCunn) and **I love the Moon** (Rubens).
- K.9494 (10in., 3s.).—**Adila Fachiri** (violin): **Les Chérubins** (Couperin, arr. Slatter) and **Variations** (Tartini-Kreisler).
- K.05124 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**The Aeolian Quintet** (strings and piano) **Arabesques, Nos. 1 and 2** (Debussy).

This Vocalion list, like that of the H.M.V., is this month unusually excellent and interesting. The Rosing records are old single-sided ones re-issued. Not having the text, I cannot say what the songs are about. The accompaniment to the first is the tick-tock of a clock; it is a dramatic song full of the melancholy of the Russian temperament; the return to the relentless ticking of the clock after the tempestuous middle section is very effective. The other side is simply delightful—a kind of folk-patter song. What an expressive language Russian is, even when one doesn't understand a word of it! Mr. Rosing's voice seems in very good order. Lazzari sings his two arias magnificently. Verdi re-modelled *Simon Boccanegra* in 1881, six years before writing *Otello* and ten years after the production of *Aida*. This fine aria (translated on another page) is therefore of great interest as showing the transition in style. What would one not give for a performance of Rossini's *Barbiere* by artists of the calibre of Lazzari. The recording is the best of a bass I have heard for a long time; for there is no edge to the voice, as is so often the case. Rosa Raisa has one of those

voices which naturally record beautifully. Her rendering of the aria from *Mefistofele* is really notable. Here again the recording spares us any feeling of blast or harshness. The song tells how Margarita, cast into prison for having killed her child, bewails her fate. Though much of the music sounds old fashioned, there are touches which indicate an ambition to rise above such commonplace treatment as Gounod accorded this scene. For instance, that sudden transition on a long held note from major to minor, indicative of a sudden gust of despair.

The reverse also deals with a prison scene. Manrico is condemned to death and his mother, Azucena, is to be buried alive! He tries to comfort her. I find it very hard to take *Il Trovatore* seriously after seeing the "Four Corpses" done by the "Chauve-Souris"—surely the best operatic parody that ever was—but there is no denying the fine full-bloodedness of it all. Rimini, Raisa's husband, joins her in an excellent interpretation. Another good singer emerges in Morlais Morgan, who upholds the best traditions of the Principality. In addition to a beautiful voice, his diction and rhythm are first rate. In fact, the only grumble I have is over his Scotch, which is not as to the manner born, naturally! "The Jolly Tinker," with its street cry and patter would have been a pleasant inclusion in the *Beggar's Opera*. Olga Haley sings Schubert's delicate water music with complete understanding. Here let me congratulate Ivor Newton on his accompaniments to all these songs and particularly to this one; those repeated notes are the very devil to play! How beautifully Schubert arranges his modulations; how exquisitely he suggests the shimmer of the water. I can't agree with the slowing-down at the end of each verse; it pulls up the march of the song too often. Rachmaninoff has written many excellent songs, of which this is one of the best. It is mixture of *lieder* and folk-song; a lament over the ruin of the fields. It suits Miss Haley's dramatic style admirably. Both these are well recorded, as, indeed, all are on this list. Malcolm McEachern's choice of *The Great Adventure* lets down the high level before reached. It is a sentimental piece of bombast, but the nautical song is a breezy effusion capitably given. My stock of superlatives is getting exhausted, but I must keep a word of praise for Kathleen Destounel's clean, musical singing of two old favourites. I regret the unnecessary high note on the word "and" in *Cherry Ripe*, but otherwise here is a most charming record. All the arrangers of these songs may take a considerable share of praise for their work; often they have enhanced the beauty of the old tunes, they have never detracted from them. *I love the Moon* is a frank, straightforward ballad; the music is better than the words: "I love the flowers, the forest, the fun." I fear it was "fun" because of "sun"; one can sympathise! *One lone Star* is a ballad written by a musician. This record is an improvement on the last done by Miss Moncrieff. Mme. Fachiri plays one of Couperin's fascinating little pieces with the additions deemed suitable by the arranger. She follows this on the reverse with a sparkling performance of the *Tartini Variations*. Like her sister, her phrasing is splendid, but her tone is not so full.

The awful rapidity with which reviews have had to be done this month, combined with fog, make it hard for one to transcribe a clear opinion of all the records listened to. At a first hearing the arrangements of Debussy's early piano work are as successful as things of the kind can be. Personally I don't think the music has enough meat in it to stand the new medium. Moreover the *Arabesques* are quite definitely piano, not string, decorations. The first is the more pleasing of the two; the second is just a little dull. The balance is good, the playing nicely adjusted to the delicate texture of the music. N. P.

Miscellaneous Reviews

There is a new series of 7in. *Nursery Records*, in three albums (12s. 6d. each album of six records), as charmingly got up as last year's series, and much on the same lines, by the Gramophone Co. The Little Mayfair Orchestra plays delicately and with spirit, "Uncle George" is as portentous as usual, "Uncle Walter" with his pleasant indistinct voice sings well, and as before the only blot on the entertainment is "Uncle Charlie." Probably well-known names are concealed under these pseudonyms; but I shall stick to my distaste for Uncle Charlie. He shan't come near my children, though they will miss thereby the *Trip to Moonland*, which they would enjoy.

The Grosvenor Orchestra makes a good record of Montague Ewing's *Fireflies Ballet Suite* on Aco F.33070 (4s.) and except for a slight lapse of intonation once or twice, I thought this dainty

music admirably played. I prefer Miss Peggy Cochrane's playing of her own rather undistinguished *Cradle Song* to that of the better-known Fauré (F.33069, 4s.), but the two make a very soothing record. Miss Edith Furredge is disappointing this month on F.33068 (4s.). She has a fine contralto voice as she has proved in the past, but *O Peaceful England*, that lovely song of Edward German, and Hatton's *The Enchantress* are comparative failures. Miss Furredge has a way of enunciating a word at random which is almost more disconcerting than the usual blur. "Sword" will escape your ear at the beginning of the chorus, but you will hear about the "buckler" all right (in the former song).

For pep and vim and the other constituents of a "light vocal" performance in the States, commend me to Miss Isabelle Patricola—a lovely name!—on *Vocalion* X.9497, (3s.) on which she sings *Go, Emmaline* and *I can't get the one I want*; it's a ear-splitting exhilarating experience, and while I sat listening petrified, I cheered myself by thinking how wonderful it would be to see Miss Patricola recording. I guess they got fun when she's there. Sidney Hamilton on the other hand, has a charming, if not very clear, tenor voice and sings *If I had only known from Patricia* and *Just to hold you in my arms* (Voc. X.9495, 3s.) and follows up the arm motif with *When you are in my arms* from *Poppy*; so that it is reassuring to find *Crinoline Gown* from *The Co-Optimists* on the other side of X.9496! Perhaps it was the crinoline gown that he hadn't known about.

Three records from the Imperial list have somehow drifted into my heap this month, containing three Christmas hymns by the Vesper Trio, on 1360 and 1362 (2s. each) and a Billy Whitlock—*The Bell Ringer*—on the fourth side. But why a trio for hymn tunes? They are quite effective all the same, though rather crudely sung; and *The Bell Ringer* is seasonable. Leonard Hubbard makes an adequate record of *From one till two* and *Put away a little ray of golden sunshine for a rainy day* on Zono, 2509 (2s. 6d.), and Frank Webster sings Tosti's *Ideale* and Broughton's *An Ancient Custom* on Zono, 2508 (2s. 6d.), in his usual pleasant style. The inimitable Max Darewski worries me when he rises to Chopin—*Waltz in D flat* and *Mazurka in B minor* (Zono, 2511, 2s. 6d.)—not because he doesn't play them well—he does—but because others can play them as well as he can, whereas he stands alone in my opinion as a player of dance music on the piano. His *I'm Wonderful* from *Mlle. Kiki* on Zono 2488 remains unchanged in my collection. I suppose I ought to hand *The Savoy Irish Medley* (one-step) and *Scottish Medley* (one-step) on Zono, 2506 (2s. 6d.) to the reviewer of dance records; but as it is played by the Horwich R.M.I. Band I may be allowed to say that it is a capital performance; and as I am told that the one-step is now practically defunct, this may be allowed to rank as a band rather than a dance record. By the way, I did not mention another band record last month, *Columbia* 3503 (3s.), containing *The Wooden Soldiers' March* of Launitz and *The Birds and the Brook* of Stultz. The former is a charming tune, but should be played at 75 instead of 80 to get its proper effect.

Those who dare to consider themselves connoisseurs of restaurant music are already aware that Parlophone records have almost set a new standard; and I only wish that they were sent to me for review. I found this month that even De Groot had lost some of his charm for me, though probably his *What'll I do?* and *Chanson Hindoue* (H.M.V. B.1922, 3s.) is as good a record as any of his repertoire. The mid-month issue of H.M.V. contains this, and also capital selections from *Poppy* (C.1178, 4s. 6d.) and *Primrose* (C.1180, 4s. 6d.), played by the Mayfair Orchestra; Brooke Johns singing *I'm gonna knock* and *Mindin' my business* (B.1923, 3s.), a record to hear and enjoy but not perhaps to keep as a pet; and a remarkable *Fantasia One-step* (C.1179, 4s. 6d.), in which the Savoy Orpheans, the Selma Four and the Savoy Havana Band have recorded consecutively and without interruption on one side; on the other is a *Savoy Medley One-step*, played by the Orpheans alone. The transference of these bands from Columbia to H.M.V. is the chief sensation of the moment in the dance world, and they are going to carry on the Paul Whiteman *Rhapsody in blue* idea, on dit, and assail the high-brows with the new orchestration. But, personally, I am not so enamoured of the playing of the Savoy Havana Band nor of the Savoy Orpheans lately as to think that the loss to Columbia is a matter for commiseration, though the records they make are still no doubt big sellers. As a rule I much prefer Paul Whiteman and Jack Hylton on H.M.V. and Vincent Lopez on Parlophone. Talking of big sellers, *Melodies of the moment* (Parlo. E.5288, 5289, 2s. 6d. each) is certain to sell hugely; it has all the good tunes of the moment; but to my mind it deserved to be far more carefully recorded.

PREFERRING.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of a manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

MORE SYMPHONIES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The excellent results produced by the Symphony lists, published by THE GRAMOPHONE in March last, suggest that since we have obtained nearly all the works specified, we should prepare lists for the ensuing year. The appreciation of collectors for the good work done by the magazine in this direction cannot be too highly stated. As a suggestion for forthcoming possible productions I would specify as follows:—1. Beethoven No. 3, complete (*Eroica*) (in place of the Columbia mutilated edition). 2. Beethoven No. 6 (*Pastoral*). 3. Mozart No. 41 (*Jupiter*). 4. Tchaikowsky No. 4. 5. Mendelssohn (*Scotch*). 6. Mendelssohn (*Italian*). 7. Elgar No. 2. Mr. J. T. Fisher, the Secretary of the Brixton Gramophone Society, very kindly writes me that the *Jupiter* and *Pastoral* Symphonies have recently been published by the Musica Company. Also that the scratchiness of these records has been much improved. I shall be anxious to hear further reports on these records before ordering. As regards Haydn, the Victor Company of the United States published the *Surprise* and *Military* symphonies some years ago. They are incomplete. The former has about six and one-half pages "cut" in the first movement. (Bars 36 to 172, "Philharmonia" edition approximately.) The latter has the *Adagio* of the first movement completely absent.

I believe the publication of Symphonies wanted will be productive of the invaluable results achieved during the present year.

Yours faithfully,

FRANCIS MEAD.

San Diego, California.

P.S.—In looking at the latest catalogue of the Victor Company, I see that Haydn's *Military Symphony* is now even more incomplete. There are only three sides: Allegro, Allegretto, and Minuet. The Finale has disappeared, its place being taken on the d.s. record by a *Coro e Baccanal* from *Samson e Delila*. I presume something went wrong with the matrix, and it was not considered worth replacing.—F. M.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE GRAMOPHONE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I should be pleased if through the medium of your journal I am allowed to introduce such a seemingly far-fetched theme as suggested by the heading. The gramophone has now reached a stage when its ultimate effect is almost phenomenal—a fact which even the most sceptical (and also, narrow-minded) cannot afford to ignore; so that I think the gramophone can be connected with other matters besides "subjects gramophonical," that is, directly and technically connected with the gramophone.

The hearing and appreciation of good music, hitherto regarded as a luxury, and which now has become as necessary to most people as sunlight, fresh air, and clean water, has been brought about almost entirely by the gramophone. Absolute music is not national, but international, or rather universal, and aesthetically such music should not arouse national feeling such as "this music is fundamentally British, or Roumanian or Mongolian, and its spirit is entirely opposed to that of any other nation." No, it should rather give the feeling of fellowship and communal goodwill. For example, when I listen to a Quartet of Mozart recorded by the Lener Quartet the idea that enmity can exist between nations is immediately dispelled. What concrete objects can there be worthy of conquest when our hearts can be thrilled, and our intellect stirred by such divine inspirations?

A committee of the League of Nations has been set the task of selecting the best five hundred books of world-wide repute which, as a whole, should be read as a standard of international literature. It were probably of more importance if the League of Nations appoint a committee of musicians and musical critics to choose five hundred records best calculated to promote the unity of

nations. And what more pleasant and soul-satisfying method can there be of hastening the realisation of Burns'—

"Let us pray that come it may,

As come it will for a' that,

That man to man the world wide o'er

Shall brothers be for a' that"

than that of spreading the gospel of international brotherhood by means of music *via* the gramophone?

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Stamford Hill, N. 16.

BERTRAM M. SHORT.

CONFLICTING REVIEWS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Your interesting reply to my letter in the December number leaves me crushed of course, but not converted. If an expert whom you consulted gave you certain advice one day and quite different advice the next day, your faith in his judgment might be shaken, even though he told you that his conflicting instructions indicated "an active rather than an erratic mind" and were reconcilable if read "with understanding."

However, I gladly admit that my complaint is "the worst that I can bring against THE GRAMOPHONE." I appreciate the great difficulties of record-reviewers, but I still think it should be possible to effect some improvement. Incidentally my concluding remark was not "a threat" but a sorrowful prognostication, which I hope will prove to be wrong.

Yours sincerely,

R. T.

Rathnew.

[If our good friend "R.T." cannot be converted, perhaps he can be further pulverised. He definitely accused the Editor of advising him to buy a record in one number, and of telling him in another number to leave it alone; and he gave as an instance Caruso. It sounds a serious accusation. But let us read, if possible with the context, what the Editor actually said. "On the evidence of the singing I should be inclined to attribute most of his *Faust* records to this (the second) period, but I am speaking without the book. At any rate, all his *Faust* records strike me as comparative failures. This is all the more disappointing, because Farrar and Journet are at their best in these. On the whole, I should advise readers who are beginning to collect Carusos to leave the *Faust* records until later on" (Article on Caruso, Vol. II., p. 45). "The four songs accompanied by Mischa Elman in records DK.103-4 are sugary, but under suitable conditions they will please all except the most sophisticated" (Second article on Caruso, Vol. II. p. 122). and yet in a Selected List of 46 records from the H.M.V. Celebrity Catalogue (p. 163), in which the Editor was thinking of the public in general and not only of the most sophisticated among his readers, he included *Si vous l'aviez compris* and *Les Deux Serenades* (DK.104) and the *Faust* duets, *O nuit d'Amour* and *Il se fait tard*, sung by Farrar and Caruso.

Is it not fair to say that "R.T."s charge is "almost a distortion of the facts, if the passages are read with understanding" (p. 254)? —London Ed.]

THE BEST RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am not a subscriber, because since the first publication of your delightful little paper I have amused myself by forcing one of the principal purveyors of music to stock it. I have every number, and after reading most of them two or three times it is obvious that there is room and scope for a Gramophone Society which will have for its principal object the finding and adjudicating of the best record of each thing done, and with some authority award stars and certificates which you and the companies will be at liberty to publish.

e.g.—We can safely award five stars to the H.M.V. Caruso-Galli-Curci quartet from *Rigoletto*, but only two stars to the sextet on the other side. There is a much better one at less than half the price!

Such a Gramophone Society is being formed in the N.W. district of London, and the first meeting of the section devoted to Vocal Music will take place on the first Sunday in January. Will interested readers please communicate.

With congratulations on the piano records article and best wishes for 1925.

I remain, yours faithfully,

74, Warwick Avenue,
Maida Vale, W. 9.

V. W. RUSSELL FORBES.



Gramophone Records (for JANUARY).

12-inch double-sided Red Label 8/6 ea.

AMELITA GALLI-CURCI (Soprano)

- (with orchestral acc. and Flute Obligato)
 D.B. { Pretty Mocking Bird ... Bishop
 798 { (with orchestral accompaniment)
 Si, carina (Slumber Song) Act 1 ... Meyerbeer
 (Preceded by, Bellah capretta adorata!
 (Sung in Italian) ("Linorah")

ALFRED CORTOT (Pianoforte) & THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL ORCHESTRA

- (conducted by SIR LANDON RONALD)
 Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54 ... Schumann
 On four 12-inch double-sided Red Label Records
 Nos. D.B. 722, D.B. 723, D.B. 724, D.B. 725. 8/6 ea.
 10-inch double-sided Red Label 6/- ea.

JOHN McCORMACK (Tenor)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 Violin Obligato played by FRITZ KREISLER
 D.A. { I saw from the Beach (Old Irish Air)
 636 { Arr. H. Hughes
 Padraic the Fiddler ... J. F. Larchet

DINH GILLY (Baritone)

- (with orchestral accompaniment)
 D.A. { Vecchia zimarra ("La Bohème") ... Puccini
 559 { (Sung in Italian)
 Scorri fiume ("Il Tabarro") ... Puccini
 (Sung in Italian)

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SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

- (conducted by ALBERT COATES)
 Symphony in C, No. 41 (Jupiter) ... Mozart
 D.942 { First Movement—Allegro vivace,
 Parts 1 & 2
 D.943 { Second Movement—Andante Cantabile,
 Parts 1 and 2
 D.944 { Third Movement—Menuetto
 Fourth Movement—Molto Allegro, Part 1
 D.945 { Fourth Movement—Molto Allegro, Part 2
 "Impresario"—Overture... Mozart

WILLIAM PRIMROSE (Violin)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 Sonata in A, No. 2 ... Bach
 On two 12-inch double-sided Black Label Records
 Nos. D.939, D.940. 6/6 each.

DE RESZKE SINGERS (Male Quartet)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 Studies in Imitation ... Arr. H. Hughes
 Little Tommy Tucker
 D.941 { Studies in Imitation ... Arr. H. Hughes
 (a) Little Jack Horner
 (b) There was a crooked man

12-in double-sided Black Label 6/6 each.

CATTERALL QUARTET

- Quartet in F Major, Op. 18, No. 1 ... Beethoven
 D.947 Allegro con brio—Parts 1 and 2
 D.948 Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato—
 Parts 1 and 2
 D.949 Scherzo allegro molto
 Allegro, Part 1
 D.950 Allegro, Part 2
 Quartet in F Major, Op. 22, No. 1—Scherzo
 Tchaikovsky

10-inch double-sided Black Label, 4/6 ea.

BEN DAVIES (Tenor)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 E.364 { When Laura smiles ... Arr. F. Keel
 ("Elizabethan Love Songs")
 Go to bed, sweet Muse ... Arr. F. Keel
 ("Elizabethan Love Songs")

EDNA THORNTON (Contralto)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 E.365 { Over the mountains ... Arr. R. Quiller
 When singing birds were mute
 Bernard Hamblen

ELSIE SUDDABY (Soprano)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 E.366 { The Virgin's Lullaby ... R. Boughton
 ("Bethlehem")
 Shepherd, thy demeanour vary
 Brown, arr. Lane Wilson

12-inch double-sided Plum Label 4/6 ea.

THE BAND OF H.M. COLDSTREAM GUARDS

- (conducted by Lieut. R. G. EVANS)
 C.1176 { Marche Militaire ... Gounod, arr. R. G. Evans
 "The Caliph of Bagdad"—Overture
 Boieldieu

10-inch double-sided Plum Label, 3/- ea.

UNA BOURNE (Pianoforte)

- { Finnish Rhythms ... Palmgren
 No. 1—Karelian Dance
 No. 2—Minuet
 No. 4—Minuet—Waltz
 November (En Troika) from "The Months,"
 Op. 37a, No. 11 ... Tchaikovsky

WALTER GLYNNE (Tenor)

- (with pianoforte accompaniment)
 B.1913 { Rosebud ... Drummond
 O, let no star compare with thee
 M. Head

PETER DAWSON (Bass-Baritone)

- (with orchestral accompaniment)
 B.1914 { The Tramp ... Sawyer
 Cider ... M. Mullinar

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NEW RECORDS

Zonophone Supplement No. 1, Jan. 1925

10-inch Double-sided, 2/6.

HORWICH R.M.I. BAND.

- 2506 { "The Savoy" Scottish Medley—One-Step.
"The Savoy" Irish Medley—One-Step.

ROYAL CREMONA ORCHESTRA.

- 2507 { A Day in Naples, Part I.
A Day in Naples, Part II.

FRANK WEBSTER, with Orchestra.

- 2508 { Ideale
An Ancient Custom.

LEONARD HUBBARD, with Orchestra.

- 2509 { From One till Two (I always dream of you).
Put away a little ray of golden sunshine for a rainy day.

CLARKSON ROSE, with Orchestra.

- 2510 { Our House will be all right.
Turned up.

MAX DAREWSKI, Piano Solo.

- 2511 { Waltz in D flat, Op. 64 (Chopin).
Mazurka in B minor, Op 35, No. 4 (Chopin).

DOLLIE AND BILLIE, with Orchestra.

- 2512 { You said something when you said Dixie.
What does the Pussy-Cat mean when she says "Mee-ow"?

BLANCHE TOMLIN, with Piano.

- 2513 { Precious Wee One.
Come, when the World is Sleeping.

MAX DAREWSKI'S DANCE BAND.

- 2514 { Out of a Million—Fox-Trot.
Love is just a gamble—Fox-Trot.

ARCADIANS DANCE ORCHESTRA.

- 2515 { The Golden West—Waltz.
Dreary Weather—Fox-Trot.

- 2516 { Oh, Eva!—Fox-Trot.
Lonely 'Cos of you—Waltz.

ROMAINE DANCE ORCHESTRA.

- 2517 { Go'long Mule—Fox-Trot.
Dream Daddy—Fox-Trot.

ZONOPHONE RECORDS

HEMPEL AND GALLI-CURCI.
(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The rather scathing criticism of Frieda Hempel's concert on page 258, December issue, raises to my mind a point of great importance, not only to great singers, but to the policy of our paper. It would truly puzzle a Philadelphian lawyer to draw up a programme that would suit every listener at a concert. If "J." had the job in hand, probably about ten more people would be present, but when an audience consists (as most audiences do) of about 10 per cent. high-brow, 40 per cent. middle-brow, and 50 per cent. low-brow, surely the low-brows are entitled to something for their money, and if "J." is outraged by listening to what suits them, let him reflect that it is nothing to what they suffer listening to what suits him. I presume Miss Hempel would not have sung *Dixieland* if she had not good grounds for knowing that it would be popular with a large section of her audience, and if by singing the frankly popular she also, by her better songs, teaches them something more worth while, does not the end justify the means in such a case? Unfortunately, our high-brow critics are the people who rush into print and give frequently a totally false impression of a concert or recital.

I feel personally that Galli-Curci has suffered very considerably in this way, from similar rash and regrettable criticisms, as the one referred to above, but despite all things said about her programmes, her pronunciation, or her "singing off the key," the very simple fact remains that she is more wonderful even than her records; and praise can go no higher, her voice in reality possessing a sympathetic quality quite unexpected, while in its purity and brilliance it surpasses even one's great expectations. Her programmes have been harshly criticised, but what happens at her concerts? In Manchester her old Italian songs by Pergolesi and Bononcini evoked just sufficient applause to bring her back to see if she would sing something more worthy of her voice, while (at the same concert) the opening bars of *Swanee River* evoked a storm of applause and the audience sat back smiling and happy. Both in Manchester and Liverpool her coloratura songs brought the house down, yet one critic speaking of her Albert Hall concert, said: "A section of the audience was weakminded enough to want musical fireworks, and got them." Probably it never occurred to him that 90 per cent. of her large audiences wanted to hear her for that alone. In the two concerts referred to the audience was only lukewarm till *Io son Titania* warmed them up. I cannot quite see why the audience as a whole must be ignored and only one or two studied. I must admit that my own "middle-brows" flicked violently up and down when she sang *If no one ever marries me*, but a large section of the audience appeared to enjoy it, and I fail to see why on that account, I should rush into print with a scathing denunciation of the singer. I venture to submit that it is not "cricket," and that these very biased and narrow-minded criticisms are merely the vaporisings of disordered brains.

And in conclusion, so with the policy of our paper, let us remember the three sections of musical growth. One is delighted to see from his books that the editor has not forgotten that he was once a child, and so far, one is also delighted to see that while encouraging us all to the better appreciation of music, due regard is paid to the lower stratum of gramophone enthusiasts. As an example, Captain Barnett's "New-Poor Page" leaves me very cold, but I should be extremely sorry if it was discontinued, as though it does not appeal to me, it probably does appeal to hundreds of other people, and unlike "J.," I don't want the Albert Hall or THE GRAMOPHONE all to myself, and the great point is not to kill rising enthusiasts but to encourage them to something better. The low-brows may (and probably will) become middle-brows, though I hope never high-brows. So far this appears to be the policy of our paper, and I hope it will remain so.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES RAINFORD.

Our critic "J." replies:—

"I should like to join issue with Mr. Rainford on a matter which he rightly calls of considerable importance. He suggests that the Albert Hall audience would suffer as great irritation from a programme drawn up by myself (or another "disordered vaporiser") as the one submitted by Mme. Hempel and her colleagues caused me. I am afraid that this pronouncement exposes Mr. Rainford's ignorance as to the formation of public taste in the appreciation of music, a matter in which, if he will allow me to say so, I have had long experience. If the editor will sanction it, let Mr. Rainford, myself, and any other readers sufficiently interested draw up programmes such as Mme. Hempel, skilled in

the singing of coloratura arias and lieder, could give with complete satisfaction to her audience. Is it not significant that her last programme, in which the items were arranged by public vote, contained practically nothing of negligible musical value? Mr. Rainford, who, I gather, was not at the concert criticised, gaily proceeds to generalise about it. As a matter of fact, that excellent music hall, cabaret, but not concert hall, song, *Dixieland*, was sung to a retreating audience. I hazard that they would have been equally delighted with a good familiar English or German song. On the face of it Mr. Rainford's theory that all sections of an audience should be catered for (pay your money and take your choice!) seems reasonable. Actually it is profoundly immoral. No real artiste can afford to sin against his or her artistic conscience in order to flatter the public. Nor can a self-respecting concert programme contain both good and bad music. Really it cannot be comprehensive, like the High Church curate at the door of the Eastern church! If art is merely a matter of entertainment, I have no more to say, but surely it has higher functions. Some of us have an insight into the inner workings of the musical world denied to Mr. Rainford. I did not rush into print for the fun of it, but because there are occasions when one has to speak out even against artistes one admires.

The critic has to fight for the interests of stars, as great in their spheres as Mme. Hempel or Mme. Galli-Curci, who have no press backing, no heralding nor trumpeting. Finally, can we come to no decision about the terminology of "brows"? "High-brow" is evidently to be used permanently in a derogatory sense. Heaven forbid that I or any of those—there are some, Mr. Rainford—who feel like me should ever be middle-brows; people who sit on the fence or run with the hare and hunt with the hounds! I hate artistic snobbery as much as anyone, but I hope never to deflect one inch from the highest standard in music. This I have all my life been fighting for. In that spirit I wrote the criticism of Mme. Hempel's concert. Music is not a material nor a commercial growth, not a soothing syrup nor a pleasant digestive, not a titillating sentimentality, but (with a full recognition of the joys of good light music) a vehicle of the noblest thoughts of man—a spiritual entity."

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Very humbly, as no musical critic but a mere admirer of Madame Galli-Curci's records, may I venture a protest against the repeated suggestion that the prima donna's rendering of songs on the concert platform is in any way inferior to these. Perhaps I heard her on a particularly fortunate night, for certainly no one could have gone to a concert with greater expectations, and, therefore, greater possibilities for being disappointed, but she gave among her songs six of which I have records (several being placed by you in Class I.): *Comme autrefois*, *Qui la voce*, *L'Éclat de Rire*, *La Capinera*, *Nella Calma*, and *Clavelitos*, and every one of these was almost identical with or even finer than the recorded version, being given, moreover, with a simplicity of manner which contributed additional charm.

I may state that my gramophone is a very good one, and, with a fibre needle, gives results as near perfection as I expect to hear in my lifetime. Other songs were equally well sung, and if they were not all of the same musical value, it should be noted that the less classical were those which made most appeal to a fair proportion of the audience, and it is necessary, especially, no doubt, in the provinces, to cater for all tastes.

With best wishes for the continued success of your interesting and useful magazine.
Yours faithfully,
Sheffield. B. M. DICKINSON.

A CORRECTION.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The authors of the article "Test of Pianoforte Records" assert that the records issued by this company of César Franck's *Symphonic Variations* "are cut to an extent which appear to us unnecessary and the records are inclined to sound abrupt to one closely familiar with this very beautiful work." We should like to point out that not a single note of the score is missing from the records and we shall be glad if you will publish this letter in correction of the above statement in the article.

Yours faithfully,

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED

RUDDIGORE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Further to Mr. Haworth's remarks on the subject of the *Ruddigore* records, the following may be of interest.

I was lucky enough to be present at the first night of *Ruddigore* in London in 1921, and on that occasion, and on subsequent occasions during that season, when I saw it, the song *Henceforth all the crimes that I find in "The Times"* was always omitted. Nor has any reason for this omission ever been given publicly, to the best of my knowledge.

I again saw *Ruddigore* in July, 1924, in London, and on this occasion the whole of the duet *The battle's roar is over* and the verse "My hopes will be blighted, I fear" in Act II., were cut; so that the Gramophone Company is really giving us a fuller version than Mr. D'Oyly Carte.

Mr. Haworth is evidently not aware that a part, at least, if not the whole of *Princess Ida* has been already recorded, with all the D'Oyly Carte Company principals, including Henry A. Lytton, in their original rôles. It will, I presume, be issued to the public next autumn.

In conclusion I should like to congratulate THE GRAMOPHONE for its excellent and impartial reviews of new recordings, which alone would make it worth the shilling that we pay so cheerfully for it.

Yours faithfully,

R. WAILES.

WHICH ILLUSION?

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Captain Barnett's article in this month's GRAMOPHONE contains a passage which quite apart from its context suggests to me an interesting question of principle. He writes of the "instrument in the room" as the goal to which all his work has been directed. Now this is all very well from the technician's point of view as he is concerned with the perfection of the means of reproduction rather than with the reproduction itself. If, however, such a standard were adopted by the ordinary user of a gramophone who wishes to obtain the best musical result, I can only submit that he would be attempting something which is not possible and which, if it were possible, would in most cases be highly undesirable. In the first place, there *must* be a certain loss in quality between the original performance and the reproduction, some of which occurs, I believe, between the master record and the finished commercial product, and this loss would tend to become more apparent the more nearly the volume of the reproduction approached that of the original performance. Apart from this, does anyone imagine that a full-toned reproduction of an orchestra or an operatic aria would be enjoyable if listened to in an ordinary drawing-room? Under such conditions a singer would, if he were an artist, suit his songs and his voice to his environment, but usually when such an one sings for recording purposes he wishes to exhibit his full powers. He is singing for posterity, and it won't be his fault of posterity fails to hear him. Besides in certain kinds of music a singer *must* let himself go. It would obviously be absurd to roar *Tremble ye Tyrants* as gently as any sucking dove. So far, I think most people will agree, and yet I have heard the quartet from *Rigoletto* played with a needle of such volume that the effect, with reservations as to quality of tone, was as though the four powerful singers were actually in the room bellowing at the tops of their voices, the result naturally bearing no resemblance whatever to music and nearly lifting the roof.

My object in writing this is to suggest an ideal which is not only more nearly attainable, but which is in the end far "truer to life." Most people play their gramophones far too loud. Be satisfied with a reproduction which gives as nearly as possible the illusion of listening to the voice or orchestra from well back in an ordinary concert-room. This can be obtained with a soft needle, preferably a fibre, without the loss of quality and harshness of tone which inevitably attends any attempt to extract from the record, by main force, all that was put into it, including the wax. You can shut your eyes and imagine yourself at the Queen's Hall, but a Queen's Hall without rustling programmes or anyone discussing their servants or illnesses in a seat behind you, and you can listen to Brahms No. 2 without having your present enjoyment spoilt by the sub-consciousness of something you loathe to follow. If anyone

is inclined to think that this is a too optimistic estimate of the present powers of recording let them try the latest H.M.V. version of Schubert's *Unfinished*, and if they will be content to listen to it from a back seat, as it were, I think they will admit that it brings us at least a step nearer to the ideal.

Yours very truly,

Purley.

LIONEL GILMAN.

SPECIALISED SOUND-BOXES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR.—I fear that your peptonised note upon the Brixton Gramophone Society's November meeting does an injustice to some of the finest sound-boxes in existence. Those of us who are privileged to possess sound-boxes made by Mr. Vitz have no hesitation in saying that they are unsurpassed. They are "highly specialised" in the sense that Mr. Vitz makes each one to suit a particular machine and to excel on particular types of record on that machine. But I find that even on machines and on types of record for which they were not specially designed they can give points to other boxes. For tonal quality, definition, sensitiveness and volume (especially with fibres), I do not know their equal. All my "romantic" tendencies have been effectually stopped since I met Mr. Vitz. My only regret is that I didn't meet him earlier; I have wasted a lot of money on sound-boxes!

I would like to take this opportunity of adding two remarks to Mr. Little's letter on p. 205. There is one type of (British) motor on the market in which the spindle is almost always too small. This fault can usually be corrected by placing over the top the inner portion of a size 0 capsule, which can be obtained from a chemist. If even then any particular record fits loosely it is advisable to use the device (due, I believe, to Mr. Balmain) of placing a small piece of thin silk over the spindle and pressing the record over it. Fired by Mr. Little's example, I have recently worked out, theoretically, what the effect of a "swinger" should be. As was to be anticipated, a pure tone is reproduced as a note of oscillating pitch. The interesting point, however, is that this note can be analysed (by a method suggested by Lord Rayleigh in Vol. 50 of the *Philosophical Magazine*) into a series of tones of slightly differing pitch. Thus, assuming that the record makes 80 revolutions per minute, or $1\frac{1}{3}$ revolutions per second, a pure tone of frequency "f" vibrations per second will reproduce as a series of tones of frequency $f, f + 1\frac{1}{3}, f - 1\frac{1}{3}, f + 2\frac{2}{3}, f - 2\frac{2}{3}, f + 4, f - 4$, and so on. All these tones coexist, but which of them predominate depends on the frequency f, the extent of the eccentricity and the radius at which the note occurs. With a frequency of 1,000 (about two octaves above middle C) at a radius of two inches, and an eccentricity of only one-hundredth of an inch, the series will sensibly consist of over a dozen of these combination and difference tones. No wonder the note becomes hideous. It appears that the trouble begins when the frequency multiplied by the eccentricity and divided by the radius exceeds three.

Here is another "ghost" for your collection. On the inner ring of *Poor wandering one* (*Pirates*), the ghostly voice makes the not inappropriate remark "Come and find him (? it)."

Yours faithfully,

Putney.

P. WILSON.

FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I hope it will interest you to hear from a regular South African reader who has been a subscriber to your excellent periodical since its publication. I hope you may exert your influence to urge upon the various recording companies to issue the following vocal items for which most enthusiastic collectors have hitherto been hoping in vain:—

Zauberflöte—Königin der Nacht arias; *Don Giovanni*—Non mi dir; *Entführung aus dem Serail* (*Seraglio*): Aria of Constante—Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln; *Tosca*: Duet from First Act—Ah, quegli occhi; *Tosca*: Duet from last Act—Amaro sol per te; *Enfant Prodigue*—Air de Lili; *Parsifal*: Kundry's Aria—Seit Ewigkeiten herr ich deiner; *Rosenkavalier*—Waltz of Baron Ochs; *Rosenkavalier*—Aria of the Marschallin; *Salomè*—Dein Haar ist grässlich.

Furthermore, German *Lieder* are badly neglected by the recording companies; we want Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Wolf sung in German by Hempel, Slezak, Onegin and Whitehill, to mention

only a few inimitable interpreters. Several singers should be recorded *ad infinitum*; we cannot have too many records of Hempel, Kurz, Alda, Onegin and Ponselle and can easily dispense with many of Galli-Curci, Smirnoff, and Chaliapin.

At the risk of making my letter too long I would suggest the following records from my collection to your readers:—

Alda—*O mio babbino caro* (H.M.V.); Alda—*Je dis que rien* (H.M.V.); Amato and Galski—*Su dunque* (H.M.V.); Caruso—*L'alba separa* (H.M.V.); Clément—*Vainement ma bien aimée* (H.M.V.); Destinn—*Vissi d'arte* (H.M.V.); Farrar—*Je connais un pauvre enfant* (H.M.V.); Farrar—*Un bel di*, now only obtainable on Victor, and coupled with *Vissi d'arte*, No. 6110; Farrar and Schumann-Heink—*Wanderers Nachtlied* (Victor, 87504); Gigli—*Notturmo d'amore* (H.M.V.); Glück—*Tu* (H.M.V.); Hempel—*Ah vous dirai-je maman* (Victor, 6364), this is the finest record of the finest voice in existence; Hempel—*Qui la voce sua* (H.M.V.); Homer—*Amour viens* (H.M.V.); Jeritza—*Divinités du Styx* (H.M.V.); Johnson—*Ch'ella mi creda* (H.M.V.); Journet—*Cantique de Noël* (Victor, 6179), the best bass record I know of; Journet—*La haine* (H.M.V.); Martinelli—*Recondita armonia* (H.M.V.); Matzenauer—*Voi lo sapete* (Victor, 6327); McCormack—*Carmela* (H.M.V.); McCormack—*Il mio tesoro* (H.M.V.); Melba—*Depuis le jour* (H.M.V.); Whitehill—*Amfortas Gebet* (H.M.V.); Zanelli—*O Primavera* (H.M.V.); Boninsegna—*Amor sull'ali* (Col.); Ponselle—*O patria mia* (American) (Col. No. 49557); Onegin—*Sieh, mein Herz erschliesset sich* (Musika, 72705); Onegin—*Chanson Bohème* (Brunswick); Kirkby Lunn—*He shall feed His flock* (H.M.V.); Piccaver—*Preislied* (Musika, 76547).

Yours truly,

Stellenbosch.

Dr. C. DE VILLIERS.

THE ALIGNMENT QUESTION, ETC.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Wilson, in his algebraical article on the above, in your September number, says that "very short pivoted tone-arms make for bad reproduction and ruined records" and mentions five inches as extremely short. This statement may fit in with his theories, but is not true in practice. My machine has a tone-arm $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long between centres, and I get very good reproduction and long-lasting records. I use steel needles, but only use those which, after microscopical test, I know to be right as to their points. My tone-arm and sound-box are light—the latter weighing only $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. My reproduction is of good quality and volume, except, of course, on weak recordings. I am very little troubled with blast, or rattling not due to record defect. I use an aluminium diaphragm and can assure those who have not tried one that it will be found equal, if not superior, to mica and much less easily damaged. I found the corrugated kind (sold at a fancy price) yielded too much surface-noise, though otherwise very good. The one I use is made from the bottom of a small box, thinned down so as to have about the same rigidity as the mica put in by the makers. Aluminium, however, might not be suitable under extreme conditions. I see there is a pother in your November number, about fitting the stylus finger to the diaphragm. I use a paper washer both sides of the diaphragm and no cement of any kind. I have tested this on both diaphragms for years and never have rattle or loosening of the screw, complained of by "Sound-box." Of course, threads of screw and hole must be good. In my sound-box the finger is of brass; possibly this "binds" better than a steel thread would. Rubber washers are not satisfactory and prevent a tight joint. The adjustment of the tension may trouble some of your readers. I learnt the following method by the expenditure of 1s. 3d. to an advertiser. Screw up the diaphragm to the finger after putting in front gasket; see that it does not touch the shell; then put in other gasket and screw on the back. Now loosen the centre screw several turns and turn one of the adjusting screws so as to bring the finger away from the diaphragm; now turn the other screw so as to bring it just in contact with diaphragm and repeat these operations until the tension is considered sufficient, finishing with the finger just in contact. These directions are for a box with flat tension springs. As regards tension, I can find little or no difference in reproduction between loose and tight, but this may not apply to all sound-boxes.

Yours faithfully,

Croydon.

GEORGE L. JOHNSTON.

SOME NEEDLE NOTES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Many gramophonists seem to be at a loss to understand why it is that certain steel needles can be used several times with no more injury to the record than is caused by an ordinary needle.

It has always been an accepted axiom that the needle should be used once only and for years the necessity for this has been drummed into us gramophonists, so that now we naturally look upon the play-ten-or-twenty-times needle with a sort of superior scepticism, and we avoid them. In so doing I contend we are wrong; and not only are we wrong, but I think I can show that the many-times needle is superior to the once-only variety. The principle of the many-times needle is, or should be, this: it is constructed so that in spite of wear it fits the groove all the time. Take the Tungstyle, for example, the playing point is about $1/32$ in. in length and the diameter for the whole of that length is the same, viz., the width of the groove in the record. Consequently it can play without damage till all the playing point is gone. Now that is an example of a needle constructed upon the right principle for playing several records; but there are other needles advertised for playing many times which have the usual tapered point and these, I assert, are unsuitable for more than one or at the most two, 12 in. sides, for as the point wears away it is getting wider and riding higher in the groove, until it will soon cease to fit, then it will commence to plane away the edges of the groove (I have watched the little devil at work with microscope and electric light focussed upon the point whilst playing), and there will be formed at the point a little tuft which is usually taken for dust from the bottom of the groove. But get out your magnifying glass and your pocket torch, and you will easily see this little tuft of "dust" being formed; little shavings of vulcanite will curl up round the point of the needle just as if in a small lathe.

Now this leads us to a very important conclusion, and in my opinion the cause of records becoming so badly worn for the first quarter or half-inch of the disc is entirely due to the practice of using sharp-pointed needles and of putting a new one in every time. The sharp point is worn off at the expense of the surface of the record in the first half-inch of playing; it has then formed itself into an ideal playing point, or rather a rounded edge instead of a point. Now this edge would not harm the record very much if the form could be retained, but the needle tapers rather abruptly, so it soon loses the correct shape. The untapered point, however, retains this ideal playing edge all the time. A fibre needle does exactly the same thing. The actual point of the pyramid at the playing end of the fibre is gone in one or two revolutions and a rounded edge is formed which fits the groove.

The moral seems to be this. If you must use the once-only needles, let the point get worn off by repeatedly running over the first two plain grooves on the record, by lifting the sound-box and, as soon as the first note is heard, replacing at commencement.

Yours faithfully,

Ulverston.

E. H. P. SCANTLEBURY.

[We print the above letter on the principle of free speech for our readers; but we are afraid that Mr. Scantlebury is basing an unsound argument on incorrect premises and that he will quickly have the experts in full cry after him.—ED.]

THE IDEAL RECORD.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The rate of linear speed at the outside of an ordinary 12 in. record is roughly 4 feet per second or 240 feet per minute.

At 10 in. rate is (say) $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet or 210 feet per minute; 8 in. rate is (say) 2 feet 10 inches or 170 feet per minute.

A good "bright" speed, sufficient to get all harmonics may be taken as 200 feet per minute.

On the "Ideal" folding cylinder, 12 inches wide and 3 feet in diameter we get (at 100 lines to the inch) $12 \times 100 \times 3 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$

$$= 11,314 \text{ feet or (in time) } \frac{11,314}{200} = 56 \text{ minutes.}$$

This will give us Beethoven without a break and without that "hideous flattening."

Yours faithfully,

Ashtead.

C. BALMAIN.

[I wish that I had room to print Mr. W. S. Wild's amusing "Family Joke for Christmas 1924"—a Plea for Birth Control of Terminology—in which Mr. Balmain figures grimly; but perhaps it is as well that there is no room.—ED.]

Gramophone Societies' Reports

LEICESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—After only two months of existence, the members of the Leicester Gramophone Society have found it necessary to seek larger quarters, and on November 25th they held their most successful meeting so far, when some thirty members and friends gathered to hear a very instructive talk by Mr. Arthur de Solla, a Leicester expert, on the general principle and care of machines. He gave us valuable hints, and touched on some interesting controversial questions, such as the relative advantages of mica and other substances for the sound-box. He held that mica is the only substance in which the vibrations are even over the whole surface. The lecturer emphasised the necessity of winding up with the brake released, and, with the aid of a model motor spring, and tone-arm in different stages of construction, made this and other points clear. He proved that the cause of "bumping" is in most cases to be laid at the door of over-winding, which makes a kink in the inner leaves of the spring, and causes this to catch the outer leaves. Mr. de Solla was heartily thanked for his talk, and promised to give a further one in the New Year.

On Monday, December 8th, we had a very enjoyable musical evening from Mr. C. M. Abell, which was thoroughly appreciated.—M. PAUL DARE, *Hon. Secretary*.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—A perusal of the published reports of the various gramophone societies' meetings inclines one to the opinion that nine-tenths of the programmes submitted consist almost exclusively of expensive Celebrity records. The disposition on the part of demonstrators to confine their attention to records of the high-priced and presumably "high-class" variety is one from which the Liverpool Society has suffered (the word is used advisedly) in a progressive degree. In an endeavour to counteract the tendency and restore a correct standard of values the Committee as a body undertook to select and present a collection of medium-priced records, worthy of inclusion in the collection of even the fastidiously inclined. The programme was presented on Wednesday, November 5th, and the success of the effort may be judged by the fact that at the close of the meeting numerous requests were received for particulars and numbers of the records included in the programme. Some of the more notable items may be mentioned with the general comment that all are good and several deserve front-rank honours. *Legend* (Tchaikovsky), Muriel Brunskill (Col.); *All Ungherese* (Glazounov), English String Quartet (Col.); *Air on G string*, Tertis (Vocalion); *Tourbillon*, Amadio (Vocalion); *Dove sono*, Bettendorf (Parlophone); *Serenade*, Juan Manen (Parlophone); *Jour de juin*, Megane (H.M.V.); *When evening twilight*, Century Quartette (Columbia). It should be mentioned that, through the courtesy of Messrs. Jake Graham, we were privileged to hear the results obtained from the new H.M.V. instrument with pleated diaphragm. Though the tone at times was inclined to be somewhat rough the instrument gave, on the whole, pleasant reproduction and more than adequate volume. Occasionally, and at unexpected junctures, there was failure to render correctly an isolated note, but this no doubt is a fault that may be remedied. The consensus of opinion was that the invention is conceived on right lines and with further experiment and development has great possibilities.

On the evening of Wednesday, November 19th, the members of the Liverpool Society were faced with a provoking dilemma, that of choosing between attendance at a Gaudi-Curci concert and a meeting at which Mr. C. S. Davis was to deliver a lecture on "The Growth and Development of Chamber Music." The writer chose—as a matter of duty, perhaps—the lecture. It may be that at the concert he would have found the greater enjoyment, though this is, after all, problematical, but one thing is certain, he would have learned a great deal less of matters which, to the music lover, are well worth the knowing. Mr. Davis outlined the history of chamber music from the time of Bach to the present day, grouping the composers into three main schools: The Classicists, represented by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven; the Romanticists, represented by Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms; and the Moderns, of whom Franck, Tchaikovsky, and John Ireland were taken as typical examples; the classification being not only appropriate historically but relevant in the great measure to the style, vision, and intention of the composers. Excerpts from the works

of each were demonstrated by means of gramophone records and the lecturer's annotations of the several items were singularly facile and apt. One would like to offer a commentary on the programme as a whole, but must be content to mention briefly but two or three of the selections. For delicacy and skilfulness in the treatment of an alluringly tuneful work there could hardly be anything more delightful than the playing of the Beethoven *Sonata in G major*, by Wm. Murdoch. Most lovers of Chamber Music will number amongst their prized possessions the record of the *Andante con moto* from the Schubert *Quartet in D minor*, by the Lener Quartet, an item which called forth quite an ovation. Admiration for the always brilliant and musicianly playing of Mr. Arthur Catterall was enhanced on hearing his beautiful treatment of the broad and rich melody of the *Adagio* from the *D minor Sonata* of Brahms. How much finer this than the desolating musical trifles offered too freely by the so eminent virtuosi.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—The fixtures for 1924 were brought to a close by the meeting of December 8th, at which Mr. H. Lewis gave a miscellaneous programme suitable for a Christmas gathering. Whilst there were items which amused rather than elevated and in consequence far removed from the Society's usual style, there were a number of items which the most critical could enjoy, e.g.: *Then shall the righteous shine forth*, from *Elijah*, and sung by Evan Williams; a very beautiful record of *Entreat me not to leave thee*, by Kirkby Lunn; and *He shall feed His flock*, sung by Louise Homer. One or two of the other famous contraltos also sang, but only served to show up the beautiful voice of Mme. Kirkby Lunn.

Those amusing items referred to were rather undignified from the Society's point of view, but they were excusable because the members had gathered together on this one occasion of the year to be simply and easily entertained.

They became for an hour or so very, very low-brows and enjoyed it. All of which goes to prove that those who can revel in and fully appreciate the masterpieces in symphony, the great world of chamber music and the music-dramas of Wagner can also descend through cheap, sugary Italian opera to the ballad and burlesque.

Well, 1925 will see them all back in the world of great music with now and then an excursion into other realms, so that everyone may more fully realise how wonderful are the works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Elgar, and many others whose names are so familiar to the musically inclined.

The second part of the programme was provided by Mr. Ardley. Here again variety and simplicity was the keynote. Perhaps the best record was *Ravin Adair*, sung by the Gresham Singers, though Gounod's *Serenade* was capably sung by Kathleen Destournel. The efforts of Mr. Ardley were very greatly appreciated.

A number of first class Parlophones were demonstrated during the interval, the finest being Schubert's *Ave Maria* and Giordani's *Caro Mio Ben*, sung by Emmy Heckman-Bettendorf, who goes on from triumph to triumph. The *Lenore No. 3* was also very favourably commented upon.

With the opening of 1925 the Society's headquarters will be removed to Clock Tower Chambers, 73, High Street, Lewisham. This has been very necessary owing to increasing number of members for whom accommodation must be provided. The new hall will be very much more comfortable and 1925 will undoubtedly be a bumper year.

Applications for admission to the Society will be welcomed by the Secretary, 128, Erlanger Road, New Cross, S.E. 14, who will be pleased to give any information that may be desired and a copy of the 1925 syllabus and prospectus.—E. G. ADHILL.

DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The first regular meeting of the Dublin Gramophone Society was held on November 13th. In the absence of the President, the chair was taken by Mr. T. H. Weaving, Vice-President, whose illuminating comments on the various items performed added greatly to the enjoyment of those who were present. Three members of the Society gave selections from their records. Mr. H. J. Youhley opened with Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*, played by the Band of the Italian Navy, thus introducing a carefully arranged programme in which vocal and instrumental records alternated. A tenor solo by Clement,

Vainement, ma bien aimé, on croit, from Lalo's *Roy d'ys* (H.M.V.), was obviously enjoyed; the record brought out well the fine quality of the voice, and the orchestral accompaniment was particularly effective. A Mendelssohn instrumental trio, *Andante con moto* and *Scherzo*, played by Catterall, Squire, and Murdoch (Columbia), was well received, after which Galli-Curci, in *Ah, non credea mirarti*, from Bellini's *La Sonnambula* (H.M.V.), was greeted with that enthusiasm which she always arouses, and which this record proved to be fully justified. After a pianoforte record, Weber's *Perpetuum mobile*, played by Moisevitch (H.M.V.), a performance rather of the brilliant order, we were next given a dramatic vocal trio, *Qual volutta trascorse*, from Verdi's *Lombardi* (Caruso, Alda, and Journet, H.M.V.). This did not appear to be greatly appreciated by the audience, which may have been partly due to the fact that the gramophone used did not seem to be at its best in powerful vocal music. A violin solo by Heifetz, Wieniawski's *Scherzo Taran-telle* (H.M.V.) and the *Rahoez March* (Berlioz, Columbia), played by the Hallé Orchestra, brought to a close Mr. Youhley's interesting and varied programme.

The second demonstrator was Mr. Dermot Webb, who opened with three records from Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. The distinctive charm of the overture (British Symphony Orchestra, H.M.V.), the delicacy of the dance-music, and the depths of tenderness in *Der Kleine Sandmann* were obviously appreciated; and the two vocal records (Gluck and Homer, H.M.V.) were applauded with marked enthusiasm. It was interesting, as the Chairman remarked, that from this impressive modern work we were taken straight back to the classics, the next item being a movement from a Mozart instrumental trio (*No. 3 in E major—Andante*), in which the combination of Catterall, Squire, and Murdoch was heard with good effect for the second time during the evening. The daintiness of the movement was commented on, although, as need hardly be said of a composition by Mozart, it is far more than merely dainty. A great contrast was the fine duet from Verdi's *Otello*, *Si, pel ciel marmoreo giuro*. The glorious singing of Caruso and Ruffo was recognised in spite of the fact that the instrument failed to do justice to this record.

Mr. Webb had two more items on his programme, but owing to the lateness of the hour he gave place at this point to Mr. L. J. Archer, whose contribution, though consisting only of three numbers, was of a most noteworthy character, the first of these being Mozart's *Thirty-ninth Symphony*. A speaker at the close of the meeting commented on Mr. Archer's courageous action in producing such a work (which took half an hour to play) at the first regular meeting of the newly-formed Society. Certainly his choice is to be welcomed as an indication of the line which one may hope demonstrators intend to take, paying their fellow members the true compliment of giving them the best music and assuming that they "needs must love the highest when they see it." So it proved in this case. If the first movement hardly seemed to meet with the enthusiasm it deserved, distinct murmurs of approval could be heard after the exquisite *Adagio*, and the applause at the conclusion of the symphony undoubtedly justified its choice. As though unwilling to leave the great master, Mr. Archer next gave us another Mozart record, a much lighter composition, but equally perfect in its way, the *Wiegenlied*, *Schlafe, mein Prinzchen schlafe ein*, inimitably sung by Frieda Hempel (H.M.V.). This was of exceptional interest to the audience, in view of the fact that Frieda Hempel last appeared at a concert in Dublin the week before and had included that same *Wiegenlied* in her selection. Those who, like the writer, were present at the concert and also heard the record, must have been struck by its remarkable faithfulness in its reproduction both of the singer's peculiarly pleasing quality of voice and of her perfect articulation. This proved to be one of the most popular items of the evening. Mr. Archer was to have concluded with a violin duet, Purcell's *Golden Sonata*, and those who are familiar with this beautiful composition must have regretted its omission owing to pressure of time. But it was some compensation that we were given instead the reverse side of the *Wiegenlied* record, and heard Frieda Hempel again in Schumann's *Du meine Seele*. On the whole, the attendance at the meeting, the quality of the music performed, and the general interest that was shown, seemed to promise well for the future of the Society.

A VISIT OF MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE.

A meeting of a unique character was held in the Shelbourne Hotel on Tuesday, December 9th, when Mr. Compton Mackenzie, whose name is a household word in both literary and musical circles and has almost a personal significance to readers of these pages, showed alike his enthusiasm for the cause of the gramophone

and his generous readiness to help and encourage, by coming to address our newly-formed Society. The attendance, including members and their friends, numbered over 250. Dr. J. F. Larchet, President, who was in the chair, expressed in suitable terms the Society's appreciation of the honour that Mr. Mackenzie had done them, and the recognition on the part of all interested in the gramophone, of the value of his paper. Mr. Mackenzie's address was of the nature of an informal talk rather than a lecture. In a delightful way he took us into his confidence, giving us an entertaining account of his original "conversion" to gramophone enthusiasm, and revealing to us frankly some of his likes and dislikes. He struck a graver note, however, when he emphasised the importance of demanding both the best music and the best possible recording of it. In this connection the lecturer pleaded for a critical habit of mind, and pointed out the danger of being too easily satisfied with one's own instrument or one's own records. He then proceeded to give us some interesting tests for purposes of comparison, by playing the well-known duet from *Traviata* (sung by Galli-Curci and De Luca) on four different gramophones, viz., Lenthall, Clifphone, Grafonola, and the Society's H.M.V., the audience being invited to give their opinion as to their respective merits by means of voting papers. The Clifphone carried the largest number of votes. The lecturer then submitted another test, this time a vocal one, *Qui la voce sua soave* from *I Puritani*, being first heard as sung by Frieda Hempel, then by Galli-Curci. An overwhelming majority decided in favour of the latter, but it is only fair to mention (as the lecturer pointed out) that the most beautiful part of the song was not included in the Hempel record. Still, the majority were, on this occasion, probably right, as the song was pre-eminently adapted to Mme. Galli-Curci's type of voice. We were grateful that Mr. Mackenzie allowed us to hear the true Frieda Hempel quality afterwards in Mendelssohn's *On Wings of Song*. Two movements from Beethoven's *Harp Quartette* made clear to us both the intense beauty of that work and also the skill with which it is played by the Spencer-Dyke Quartet, and recorded by the National Gramophonic Society, which Mr. Compton Mackenzie has inaugurated. A vote of thanks to the lecturer, proposed by the President and seconded by the Recording Secretary was enthusiastically accorded.—H. M. HARRISS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

MORECAMBE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this Society was held on October 16th, at Stock's Café, the President, Mr. W. H. Bray, presided. The Secretary submitted the report and finances of last year, which was, in every way satisfactory, and it was decided to commence the winter session on November 3rd with a recital given by Mr. T. W. Rainford, who supplied an excellent and varied programme. These recitals will practically be continued fortnightly until the end of April next. The second recital was held on November 10th, and again on November 24th. Some of the artistes were of very special merit. Mme. Galli-Curci met with great applause each time, so did Dame Clara Butt; John McCormack was heard in some of his best pieces, and Titto Ruffo was fine. The instrumental pieces in all the programmes were excellent.—T. PARKER, *Hon. Secretary*.

BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The third meeting of the season was held at our headquarters, the Imperial Café, Sefton Street, on Thursday, November 6th, at 7.30 p.m. There was an excellent attendance and the whole programme was voted a huge success by the members present. It was a dealers' night, and the firm responsible for the programme were Messrs. Pollards, of Bolton Street, South Shore, the programme consisting entirely of Columbia records. Items which stood out above others and which evoked the most applause were the two suites by the Court Symphony Orchestra and the B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra, the beautiful *Aubade* by Lalo played by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra and the wonderful rendering by Stracciari of *Largo al Factotum* from the *Barber of Seville*. The programme was exceedingly well balanced and well chosen, and a most enthusiastic vote of thanks was accorded Messrs. Pollard for a delightful evening's entertainment.

On the 20th of the month we had another well-attended meeting on the occasion of a programme of miscellaneous records by our popular committee member, Miss Bell. This programme, as will be seen, contained no less than four piano records, which is, to say the least, unusual. However, they all came out very well, my own particular favourite being the *No. 6 Rhapsody*. At the close an enthusiastic vote of thanks was passed to Miss Bell for her fine programme, and two new members were enrolled.—V. P. BARRAUD THOMAS, *Recording Secretary*.

Notes and Acknowledgments.

Sir Henry Wood.

It was an old friend and critic of THE GRAMOPHONE, Mr. James Rainford, who first drew our attention to the excellent photograph of Sir Henry Wood taken by Mr. William Crooke (103, Princes Street, Edinburgh) and published in the *Amateur Photographer* in 1917. By the courtesy of Mr. Crooke we are able to use it for the Art Supplement this month.

* * *

Among the Wilds.

The antagonists of the steel needle have mended the most dangerous joint in their armour. If you complain of the boredom of cutting fibre needles and changing them when the point breaks in the middle of the record, they can now retort with the "Wild semi-permanent fibre," about which we receive enthusiastic letters nearly every day from *fibreurs*. There is no doubt at all that they can stand up to any record, and that under fair conditions they can play about twenty normal records on end without having to be cut. Mr. Wild also claims that where previous fibres have clogged the grooves of a difficult record with dust, this can be cleared by the keen point of one of his needles. On the office "Balmain," with a Vritz sound-box, he demonstrated the truth of this claim the other day. It is likely that he will be hard put to it to supply all the orders that he will get for packets of needles; but the Gramophone Exchange is the only distributing agency in central London and has a good stock to start with.

* * *

Xylopin Needles.

On the other hand, there is the new Xylopin needle, which is only used once and then thrown away, thus avoiding the nuisance of a cutter. Mr. Wilensky has sent us some boxes of them and we hope to have reports from experts shortly. They are obviously a vast improvement on the previous type of wooden needle that Mr. Wilensky produced last year, and they have the pleasantest quality of tone imaginable; but they must be treated, we fancy, with care, and not expected to triumph over unreasonable obstacles of dusty grooves or too heavy sound-boxes. Like the Wild needles they are essentially calculated to please people who want music rather than noise.

* * *

Musica Records.

An unfortunate amount of confusion has been caused by the misprinting on Mr. W. E. Barnett's address in the November number (page 209, No. 160); it should be 5, Brightwell Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea—and also by the suggestion that he can supply Musica records. We must apologise to him and to our readers. It is the "Continental Records" of which he is the agent (see his advertisement on page xxviii. of the December number). Musica records, it seems, are not sold as such in England; but the 1924-25 *Polydore* catalogue, which can be obtained from Messrs. Alfred Imhof, 110, New Oxford Street, will be found to contain all the records which so many of our readers are evidently anxious to acquire. We hope to deal with this catalogue in a later issue.



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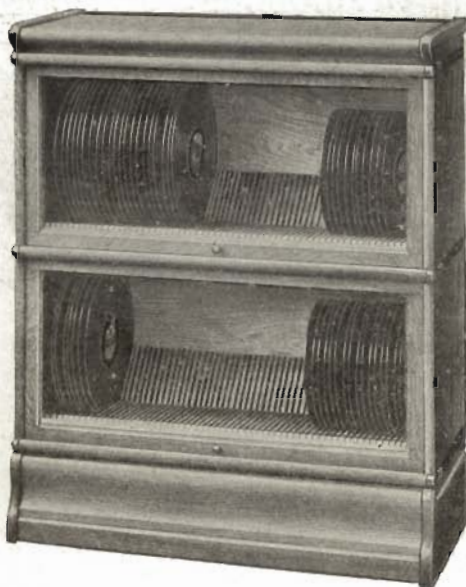
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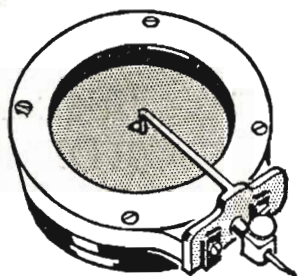
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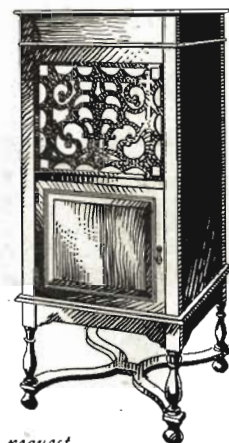
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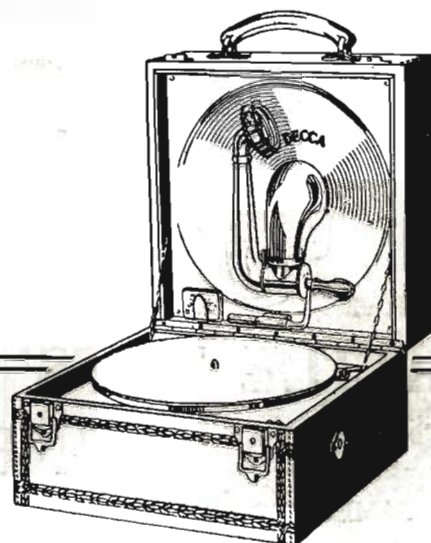
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